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Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně, že jsem řádně citovala všechny použité prameny a literaturu a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

Souhlasím se zapůjčením diplomové práce ke studijním účelům.

V Praze dne 7. května 2012 …….

Ing. Žaneta Opluštilová

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACERT	Asociace certifikovaných jazykových škol (Association of Certified Language Schools)
AJŠA	Asociace jazykových škol a agentur (Association of Language Schools and Agencies)
ALM	Audio-Lingual Method
CAE	Certificate of Advanced English
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CUP	Cambridge University Press
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELT	English language teaching
ESL	English as a second language
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
FCE	First Certificate in English
FEP	Framework Education Programme
FL	Foreign language
FLT	Foreign language teaching
GTM	Grammar-Translation Method
L1	first language, mother tongue
L2	second or foreign language
MEYS	Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports)
MoLSA	Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs)
NEF	New English File
NIO	New Inside Out
OUP	Oxford University Press
PET	Preliminary English Test
SEP	School Education Programme
SESOL	Spoken English for Speakers of Other Languages
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TL	target language
TPR	Total Physical Response

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1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis deals with the Czech specificity of teaching foreign languages in intensive one-year language courses devised specially for post-secondary students, that is, for young people who have just completed their secondary school studies. Despite the great effectiveness this form of study has demonstrated since its launch in the early 1990s, it is now, unfortunately, facing the danger of extinction. In 2007 when this diploma thesis was assigned, post-secondary language courses in the Czech Republic were perhaps past the boom, but they were, and still are, thriving. An unexpected legal measure taken by *Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy* (the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) in January 2012, however, deprives post-secondary students of the student status and the associated financial benefits and is, therefore, likely to bring this kind of language education to an end.

Among the original reasons for choosing the topic was, principally, my own experience with post-secondary study of English, from the perspective of both the student (in 1997/98) and the teacher – I have been teaching English in post-secondary courses since 2006/07. What has amazed me as a teacher was the relative arbitrariness, the largely unregulated organization and the varying quality of post-secondary education at individual language schools. Consequently, the primary objective of the thesis was to map the current situation in private post-secondary language education in the Czech Republic and to recommend suitable teaching methods and materials. In view of the recent change of legislation, however, the original, purely pedagogical objectives were expanded to include also the analysis of practical implications of the new legislation on this form of language study and the collection of a set of convincible arguments which could play a role in the ongoing negotiations between language school associations and the Ministry about the reversibility or modification of the legal conditions so that the courses can be preserved and remain economically sustainable.

The thesis is divided into two major parts. The first part serves a theoretical background to the pedagogical research. First of all, I will touch upon the available literature on the topic, and then I will mention some

lingvodidactic aspects relevant to the study. In particular, Chapters 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 will define the subject matter of language teaching and outline several theories of language learning and acquisition. Since post-secondary classes are large classes consisting of up to 18 students, Chapter 2.2.3 will present the various psychological, socio-cultural and linguistic differences between individual learners which a post-secondary teacher must bear in mind. Furthermore, Chapter 2.2.4 will give a brief overview of the historical development of teaching methods with respect to the methodology applicable to post-secondary courses and Chapter 2.2.5 will provide a basis for textbook evaluation and selection. Chapter 2.3 and its subchapters are intended as an introduction to the matter of post-secondary language education in the Czech Republic, including its history and legislative and curricular requirements.

The core of the thesis is the pedagogical research. In order to obtain sufficient data for the analysis, three private language schools organizing post-secondary courses in English were asked to participate in the survey. The methodology and factors of the research will be presented in Chapters 3.1, Chapter 3.2 will thoroughly examine the organization of post-secondary courses at the three schools and the subsequent chapters will analyse the results of two questionnaires completed by the schools' post-secondary students. Moreover, suitable teaching materials will be evaluated in Chapter 3.5. Finally, the discussion of the findings, including the twofold outcome – pedagogical and practical implications – will be summarized. The questionnaires as well as other materials related to the research are affixed at the end of the thesis.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Available Literature on the Topic

Although one-year post-secondary study of languages has existed since the 1990s, it has not attracted much attention from academia yet, perhaps since this kind of study is, almost exclusively, the matter of private language schools rather than state-regulated institutions. As a result, it is hardly surprising that professional literature focused specifically on the methodology of post-secondary language teaching is virtually non-existent, that methods and techniques employed in the courses are largely arbitrary and that the selection of textbooks and other teaching materials is driven by economic rather than educational factors.

Predominantly, students attending post-secondary courses are 19 to 22 years old. From the pedagogical-psychological perspective, this age group is hardly classifiable since it is very difficult, if not impossible, to determine an exact age at which a person matures, not only because there are significant differences between individuals, but also because biological maturity does not necessarily entail psychological maturity. Consequently, there is a significant overlap in terminology as far as this age bracket is concerned, with some authors placing the students in the category of teenage, others of young adult, and yet others of fully mature adult learners. Although it is possible, in accordance with the majority opinion, to resort to literature concerning teaching foreign languages to adults, it must be taken into account that post-secondary students constitute a highly specific type of learners, showing characteristics of both adolescents and adults. Moreover, post-secondary courses are also specific from the didactic point of view, since they, unlike standard public courses offered by private language schools, share some features with secondary school classes, especially the high number of students of more or less the same age in one group. Literature, be it pedagogical, psychological or methodological, aimed at such a narrowly defined group is, to my best knowledge, not available.

In order to fully capture this highly complex matter, it would be necessary to study a long list of publications on foreign language teaching,

learning and acquisition in both teenage and adult learners. However, with respect to the limited scope and empirical focus of the thesis, the lingvodidactic background draws predominantly on compendious theoretical works, such as *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* and *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* by H. D. Brown, the invaluable *Introduction to ELT Methodology - Learning Languages* by T. Gráf and several practical handbooks, especially those by J. Harmer (*How to Teach English* and *The Practice of English Language Teaching*) and J. Scrivener (*Learning Teaching: A guidebook for English language teachers*). Yet, none of these deals specifically with the distinctive category of secondary school leavers.

Since teaching foreign languages in general, and teaching foreign languages at commercial, essentially pragmatic language schools in particular, is not only the question of applied linguistics, but also, and perhaps mainly, the question of educational policy and economics, besides the lingvodidactic background this thesis will also present the current legislation and curricular documents affecting the post-secondary courses.

In connection with the legislation, which is published, in most cases, in Czech only, a few comments on terminology are desirable. Due to the lack of a unified approach to translating education-related terms from Czech into English, there are serious discrepancies in the documents issued by *Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy* (the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports), *Výzkumný ústav pedagogický* (the Research Institute of Education), the *European Commission*, and other institutions, whose materials the thesis draws upon. Therefore, in order to prevent any ambiguities or misunderstanding, for the purpose of this thesis I have compiled a set of key and recurrent terms and listed them in a bidirectional glossary located at the end of the thesis. The glossary is based on Průcha's *Česko-anglický pedagogický slovník* (Czech-English Dictionary of Education), *Česko-anglický slovník odborného vzdělávání* (Czech-English Dictionary of Technical and Vocational Education), issued as a supplement no. V/2007 to the bulletin of *Národní ústav odborného vzdělávání* (the National Institution of Technical and Vocational Education) and other documents enumerated in the Terminology section of Bibliography and References.

2.2 Lingvodidactic Background

2.2.1 Subject Matter of Language Teaching

Since there are several theoretical approaches to the subject matter of foreign language teaching in contemporary linguistics, it may be beneficial to briefly introduce the approach adopted in this thesis, an approach based on the concept of 'language as a system of systems'. When speaking of language as a system, one name immediately comes to mind: the name of Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, who is justly considered one of the founders of modern linguistics. As Hajičová (2003: 26) points out, he was the first to describe the binary nature of language in that he distinguished two inherent language constituents, namely *langue*, an abstract system of signs, potentially known to 'all the members of a speech community' (Corder 1975: 37), which is independent of and prior to 'the actual utterances of individuals' (Corder: ibid.), and *parole*, the concrete, idiosyncratic and situation-specific realization of the linguistic system in speech.

Hajičová in her lecture on New Trends in Linguistics explained that Saussure's linguistic theories, published posthumously in 1916, inspired several generations of linguists across the world, including, primarily, *Pražský lingvistický kroužek* (the Prague School of Linguistics) founded in 1926 by Vilém Mathesius and Roman Jakobson, whose substantial contribution to the sphere of language teaching is indisputable. In particular, the Prague School perceived language as 'a system of mutually interrelated subsystems or hierarchically organized layers' (Kretová 2006: 12), the knowledge and mastery of which is essential for communication by means of a language.

In language teaching, these language systems are called 'language forms' or 'language elements' as opposed to 'language skills', which refer to the use of the systems in communication. In particular, language forms (*jazykové prostředky* in Prague School's terminology) comprise phonology (the sound system), morphology and syntax (jointly referred to as grammar), lexis (or vocabulary), and orthography (the writing system). In other words, language forms are what Saussure referred to as *langue*.

On the other hand, the didactic term corresponding to Saussure's *parole* is 'language skills' (*řečové dovednosti*), that is, the ability 'to use the language systems in real communication' (Kretová 2006: 12). Language skills include various verbal activities such as listening, reading, speaking and writing, the former two considered as receptive skills, the latter two as productive skills. According to Scrivener (2005: 30) these four skills can be termed 'macro' skills and further subdivided into smaller 'micro' skills, 'defining more precisely what exactly is being done, how it is being done, the genre of material, etc.' For example, the macro skill listening subsumes the following micro skills: listening for gist, listening for detailed information, such as numbers and prices, and 'compensating for words and phrases not heard clearly' by guessing them from the context (Scrivener: ibid.). Mothejzíková (cited in Kretová 2006: 43-44), on the other hand, distinguishes between basic language skills (listening, silent reading, speaking, and writing), specific language skills (translation), and combined language skills (reading aloud, taking notes).

However, it is important to remember that neither of the above mentioned areas, be it language skills or language forms, exist in isolation, and foreign language learners thus must 'develop some degree of knowledge of all of these systems' (Gráf 2011: 9), and bear in mind that 'the language mastery can be achieved only through language skills'(Kretová 2006: 12). In other words, as Mothejzíková emphasizes in her *Methodology for TEFL Teachers* (1988: 46), 'items mastered as a part of a linguistic system must also be understood as part of a communicative system.'

And yet, 'there is more to English language teaching than simply the language itself', as Scrivener (2005: 33) points out. 'Students may be learning new ways of learning', they may be learning about themselves as well as other people in their class, about culture of the target-language countries, 'they may be learning how to achieve some specific goal, for example passing an exam, making a business presentation at an upcoming conference', and similar. In sum, 'the subject matter of ELT can encompass all topics and purposes that we use language to deal with' (Scrivener: ibid.).

2.2.2 Language Learning and Acquisition

The aim of this chapter is not to provide a definition of language or language learning, since learning, in general, is such a complex cognitive, social and emotional activity, that attempting at a comprehensive and universally valid definition would greatly exceed the scope of this thesis, unless grossly simplified. However, what is relevant and essential to the following chapters is the disambiguation of terms like *first, second* and *foreign language* and the distinction between *language learning* and *language acquisition*.

Starting with the former, the term ***first language*** (L1) generally refers to the learners' native, or mother tongue. However, the other two terms are far more controversial. Despite sharing a significant number of features, *second* and *foreign language* are not fully synonymous; still some authors, especially those of American provenance, treat them as virtually interchangeable. However, in educational contexts such as the Czech one the distinction between *foreign language* (FL or L2) and *second language* (SL or L2) is essential. As neatly summarized by Gráf (2011: 12-13): '***Second language*** is not one's mother tongue but it is the language of the community in which the learner lives (e.g. the situation of immigrants)'. The advantages of SL learning, as opposed to FL learning, are, primarily: the permanent exposure to the target language (TL) and the constant pressure on the learners to learn and use the TL in order to 'survive' in the society. SL learners thus practise the TL in its most natural form. Moreover, if SL learners decide to learn the language at school, they may benefit, beside other things, also from the fact that the composition of the class is often multilingual and they, therefore, cannot resort to using their L1 to make themselves understood.

On the other hand, Gráf (ibid.) continues, '***foreign language*** is neither one's mother tongue, nor is it the language of the community. Typically, it is the language which one learns in the artificial conditions of school classrooms or one's own home'. The drawbacks of learning a FL are then self-evident: the limited amount of exposure to the TL (in its natural form), the absence of the 'survival' motivation for learning and, potentially, the stress or anxiety associated with learning a language in a classroom environment. Since a FL

classroom tends to be a monolingual one, the learners are not 'forced' to communicate exclusively in the TL. However, this can be at least partly counterbalanced by the possibility to use the common L1, 'either for explanations, comparisons, or as a time-saving tool' (Gráf: ibid.). This thesis deals with the latter, that is, with the acquisition, learning and principally, the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Another distinction to be made here is that between language *learning* and *language acquisition*. Mothejzíková (1988: 24) defines ***learning*** as 'language competence that is systematically induced through formal instruction in the artificial classroom environment', Scrivener (2005: 13) as 'language we consciously study and learn about, for example in a classroom', and Harmer (2007a: 47) as 'a conscious process where separate items from the language are studied and practised in turn'. In sum, learning is an intentional, conscious and systematic process usually taking place in a school classroom.

Language ***acquisition***, on the other hand, is 'language competence that "comes natural" through social interaction' (Mothejzíková 1988: 24), 'language that we pick up subconsciously when we are engaged in communicating and understanding messages' (Scrivener 2005: 13), 'picking up a language (simply absorbing it by, for example, living in a target-language community with no formal attention to language study' (Harmer 2007b: 50). It follows that acquisition is natural, unintentional and not systematically organized.

In the past, there have been several scientific theories on how languages are acquired and to what extent the acquisition of L1 and L2 compare, and their findings have provided a basis for the formation of a number of teaching methods. Among the most influential language acquisition theories, three particularly stand out: behaviourist, cognitive, and constructivist. Since they will be briefly touched upon in Chapter 2.2.4.2 within the discussion of teaching methods they inspired, it shall be sufficient to say here that behaviourists see language learning and acquisition as a process of imitation and habit formation; cognitive theories, on the other hand, assume that language acquisition is an innate, biologically determined function of the

human brain and that learning is a result of a combination of a number of various mental processes. Finally, constructivism, namely its social branch, emphasizes the role of the environment and 'the importance of social interaction and cooperative learning' (Brown 2007:12).

Some scholars have worked on the assumption that L2 acquisition happens in more or less the same way as L1 acquisition, and have, therefore, promoted teaching methods based on the principles of L1 acquisition, especially on considerable exposure to the TL via providing comprehensible input. However, such an approach has some serious limitations. Firstly, the exposure to the TL in a FL classroom is, in comparison with that of a child acquiring the mother tongue, heavily restricted. Secondly, the influence of the learner's L1 must be taken into account. Finally, and more crucially, it must be acknowledged that the learner's age plays a central role in the process of language learning and acquisition, since the ease with which a child acquires a language 'tends to deteriorate with age' (Harmer 2007a: 47). Also, Harmer continues, 'teenagers and adults, [in contrast to children], have perfectly good reasoning powers and may want to think consciously about how language works' and wanting them to only acquire language subconsciously would seem absurd.

To sum up, besides exposure to language, learners after childhood need to study the language formally. In other words, both acquisition and learning have their part to play. That is why, as Harmer (2007b: 51) points out, 'lessons based exclusively on the acquisition view of language [...] are extremely rare.'

2.2.3 Learner Variables

The success in learning a foreign language in a classroom setting seems to be bound to the method of teaching, and, principally, to the age, personality and emotional and intellectual background of the learner. When choosing the suitable methods, materials, techniques and tasks, the teachers must take into account the fact that learners differ in many aspects.

Adopting the overall approach used by Brown (2007), in this thesis the learner variables will be grouped into four broad areas: age factors, that is, characteristics related to biological development, psychological factors,

subsuming aptitude, intelligence, learning styles, affective elements, such as anxiety, inhibition and self-esteem, and motivation; sociocultural factors, considering the learner's social, educational and cultural environment; and, finally, linguistic factors, especially the learner's level of L2 proficiency and the influence of the learner's native language on the L2 competence. Although there certainly are other factors which play an important role in FL learning, they will not be discussed here with respect to the restrained scope of the thesis.

2.2.3.1 Age Factors

The learner's age has a decisive influence on language learning and acquisition, as each stage of human development entails different cognitive, affective, personality, and social characteristics. Since different age groups have different needs, competences and skills, the way of teaching them must, necessarily, differ too.

The following discussion will be held with respect to the ages 19, 20, 21 and 22, that is, the age at which learners, on average, attend post-secondary courses (although, exceptionally, there are older students too). After the stage of 'child', generally a learner of 2 to 14 years of age, the age group definitions vary considerably. Some authors describe learners of 15 to 20 years of age as 'adolescents', others limit adolescence to the age of 18. The term 'adult' tends to refer to any learner over 20, with some sources singling out a subcategory of 'young adult' for ages from 20 to 30. Due to this terminological overlap, the characteristics (and consequent didactic recommendations) will be outlined for both – the category of adolescents and that of adults.

There is a popular myth about age and language learning that young children learn languages faster and more effectively than any other age group, especially due to the putative existence of a **critical period**, that is, of 'a biologically determined period of life when language can be acquired more easily and beyond which time language is increasingly difficult to acquire' (Brown 2007: 55). Generally, the critical period for L2 acquisition is considered to be around puberty (age of 12 or 13). Indeed, prior puberty the human brain is fairly flexible, and this flexibility, or plasticity 'enables children

to acquire not only their first language but also a second language' (Brown, ibid.), especially when surrounded by native speakers of that language. However, this neurologically based critical period seems to apply principally to the acquisition of an authentic, 'native-like' pronunciation, but not for the acquisition of communicative fluency and formal knowledge of the language which have been proved to develop at a higher age.

Consequently, apart from this pronunciation ability, it appears that adolescents and adults are 'more efficient overall learners than children' (Mothejzíková 1988: 25). Children may have better motor memory, but 'the general memory of the adult is considerably superior to that of the young child' (Mothejzíková: ibid.). Adolescents and adults, especially in formal educational settings, are believed to benefit from a number of general intellectual abilities: they have, for instance, a greater capacity for understanding and logical and abstract thought, they have developed reasoning skills and, as a result, they 'can analyse and synthesise data and discover principles' (Mothejzíková: ibid.), they acknowledge the need for learning and they are likely to have developed quite a number of useful learning skills and strategies.

On the whole, **adolescents** seem to be the most effective learners (as suggested, for instance, by Ur 1996: 286, Lightbown & Spada 1998: 48 and Gráf 2011: 34), especially if provided with substantial exposure to the language. As summarized by Harmer (2007a: 15), 'adolescent students have a great capacity for learning, enormous potential for creative thought and a passionate commitment to things which interest them'. When deciding what and how to teach them, however, their need for self-esteem and the importance of their peer group must be taken into account, for instance when 'correcting or assigning roles within an activity' (Harmer 2007a: 15). Moreover the choice of topics should reflect their emerging interests, since their lack of involvement in the subject and difficult relationships with the teacher as well as with each other may easily result in misbehaving and indiscipline.

Teaching **adults** obviously has its specificities too. Adults come into classrooms with a whole range of life experience, which can be drawn on in a wide range of activities; adults tend to be self-disciplined and cooperative, they

are capable of self-studying and, crucially, they are often able to also cope with tedious and less varied tasks. Another beneficial factor is that most adults are learning voluntarily and often have a clear goal and 'are therefore likely to feel more committed and motivated' (Ur: 1996: 287) – and as it will be seen later, motivation is a critical factor in successful learning.

Nevertheless, not even adults are 'entirely problem-free learners' (Harmer 2007b: 85). As mentioned above, adult learners have a rich range of previous experience, including learning experiences, which may hinder their progress, especially if the experiences were negative, if they have 'experienced fear of failure or of criticism at school which makes them anxious and under-confident' (Harmer: ibid.). Furthermore, adult learners have expectations about the learning process and strong ingrained views about teaching methods from their past and therefore, may be often vocally critical of the methodology and materials the teacher deploys. Finally, the teacher must be prepared, considering their busy lives outside the class, for learners' arriving late for class or failing to do any homework.

A responsible post-secondary teacher should, consequently, take all of these factors into account and allow the students 'to use their intellects to learn consciously' (Harmer 2007b: 85). Simultaneously, the teacher should strive to minimise any potential negative effects of past learning experiences and boost the students' self-confidence by offering activities which are challenging but manageable and appealing to their interests and tastes.

2.2.3.2 Psychological Factors

Closely connected with age is the learner's psychological development and the related cognitive and affective characteristics. In particular, the cognitive domain encompasses the learner's language aptitude, intelligence and the learning styles and strategies s/he has developed; the affective domain includes principally, but not exclusively, the learner's emotions and motivation. This chapter will discuss each of these areas briefly, starting with the latter.

2.2.3.2.1 Affective Domain

Understanding the learner's emotions, or affections, is a vitally important skill of every teacher, since there are a number of affective factors, such as anxiety, low self-esteem, inhibition, frustration, low willingness to communicate, boredom, etc., which can 'act as a filter between the L2 learner and his [/her] partner in communication or the learning process' (Gráf 2011: 38). An attempt to cover all of the affective variables would by far exceed the scope of this thesis; therefore, this chapter will concentrate only on the concepts of anxiety, inhibition and motivation.

Gráf (2011: 38) defines FL **anxiety** as 'the fear some learners experience when they have to perform [e.g. speak or listen] in a foreign language'. Although anxiety, intricately intertwined with personality, self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking and competitiveness, may have certain benefits (it may, for instance, lead to success in competitions), it is generally believed to have a negative effect on the learner's memory and ability to communicate. For that reason, there have been several attempts to devise a teaching method capable of alleviating FL learners' anxiety, for instance *Suggestopedia, TPR* and *Community Language Learning* (treated in detail in Chapter 2.2.4.2). Regardless of the method deployed, however, any teacher can try to reduce the learners' anxiety by promoting their self-confidence, for example, by assigning achievable tasks, by rewarding successes, by engaging them in pair- and small-group, rather than whole-class work, and 'by creating a generally relaxed, stress-free learning atmosphere in the classroom' (Gráf 2011: 38).

Another affective variable to be mentioned here is **inhibition**, which, together with self-esteem, is sometimes subsumed under the concept of **language ego**, a new language identity the learner needs to adopt (at least to some degree) in order to acquire a linguistic competence in a second or foreign language. Failure to do so may impede the success in learning the language, especially with adults. According to Brown (2007: 69-70), children do not perceive a new language as a threat to their egos, but as they grow older, they become more self-conscious and develop protective defences, or inhibitions about their self-identity, and this defensive mechanism continues into

adulthood. Since adolescents and adults are more aware of the formal system of language, their inhibitions may stem from the fear of making mistakes which the incorrect use of the system induces. An empathic teacher may try to reduce this fear, for example, by creating a positive learning environment and encouraging learners to take risks and try new language out.

Another affective factor which plays a central role in the success of L2 learning is **motivation**. 'In its broadest sense, motivation is the drive which leads the individual towards the realization of a goal' (Gráf 2011: 36). Out of the number of different types of motivation, the ones that relate to language learning in particular are: **integrative** motivation, generated when learners wish to learn a L2 in order to 'identify with and integrate into the target-language culture' (Ur 1996: 276) and participate in social interchange in the culture, and **instrumental** motivation, which is academic or career related in that it views the TL as a tool to achieve practical goals, such as succeeding in a school exam or getting a job abroad.

From the pedagogical perspective, it is crucial to also make a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, both of which can be, at least partly, affected by the teacher. In particular, external incentives for studying a L2, such as to enter a university, to get a promotion, or to watch films in the TL, are subsumed under **extrinsic** motivation. This kind of motivation 'comes from outside the classroom' (Harmer 2007a: 20), and may depend, for instance, on the attitude of society, family and peers towards the TL. As such, it is largely out of reach of the teacher's influence, although, for example, imposing reasonable authoritative demands, say, in the form of reasonably frequent and challenging tests, as suggested by Ur (1996: 279), may certainly have a motivating power.

On the other hand, **intrinsic** motivation is an internal urge to engage in learning for its own sake. This type of motivation is 'very typical of young children and tends to deteriorate with age' (Ur 1996: 276), but it can be generated (and sustained) by the teacher's action in the classroom, for example by choosing topics appealing to learners' age and interests, by employing varied, original and humorous activities which at the same time are

appropriately challenging for the learners' level, by engaging learners in game-like and competitive tasks, by using eye-catching visuals and utilizing a wide range of authentic material, such as songs and films, by involving learners in meaningful role-plays and other communicative tasks, by personalizing the tasks, but also by providing positive feedback and support, by praising and rewarding students' progress and success, and by encouraging learners' autonomy and responsibility for their own learning. In an attempt to promote the latter, for instance, the teacher can let the learners choose some of the class tasks and activities, motivate them to read, watch or listen to authentic, or graded TL material in their free time, and encourage them to use monolingual dictionaries and find their own resources for language practice in books or on the internet.

In sum, the ability to identify what motivates individual learners should be one of the primary skills of every teacher. Nevertheless, as Harmer (2007a: 21) concludes, however much the teachers do to foster and sustain student motivation, the 'real motivation comes from within each individual, from the students themselves'.

2.2.3.2.2 Cognitive Domain

The cognitive domain, as outlined in the introduction to this chapter, embraces notions like aptitude, intelligence and learning styles. Leaving aside the somewhat debatable concept of linguistic **aptitude**, or 'talent for languages', which is 'hard to distinguish from other intellectual abilities' (Gráf 2011: 36), the learner's intelligence, perhaps a more critical factor in success in L2 learning, shall be discussed here.

Traditionally, **intelligence** has been viewed as a set of linguistic and logical-mathematical abilities, measurable by means of IQ (Intelligence Quotient) tests. This view, however, has been challenged by a number of other, more comprehensive theories, out of which Gardner's model of multiple intelligences is perhaps cited most frequently. Gardner claims that every person possesses several different types of intelligences, although in different proportions. These intelligences include: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic feeling, naturalist (sensitivity to natural

objects), interpersonal (interacting with other people), and intrapersonal (understanding oneself) (adapted from Brown 2007: 108).

Partly related to the assumption that intelligence is a set of at least eight different abilities is the theory of **learning styles**, which believes that 'different learners have different learning requirements depending on how they process (i.e. obtain, digest, and retain) information' (Gráf 2011: 40), or that learning styles are 'cognitive, affective and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment' (Brown 2007: 120). Supposedly, satisfying these predisposed learning preferences of individual learners greatly contributes to their success in learning.

However, the concept of learning styles is also rather problematic, since not only is there a multitude of theories of learning styles, each analysing the matter from a slightly different angle and thus resulting in different style typology, for example, inductive vs. deductive, synthetic vs. analytic, impulsive vs. reflective (adapted from Brown 2007: 120), but also, as Gráf (2011: 40) observes, they lack conclusive scientific evidence. Moreover, 'studies show that learner styles change along with the changes in the learners' needs and proficiency' (ibid.).

Yet, it is indisputable that different students respond to certain stimuli better than to others. Perhaps the most salient in a classroom environment is the observation that humans tend to have different **sensory preferences** and, as a result, some learners are likely to remember things better if they see them, others respond best to hearing things, and others still seem to benefit from being involved in a kind of physical activity, such as moving around, or rearranging tangible, physical objects. In large classes, where a variety of personalities and learning styles is expectable, utilizing a range of visual, auditory, and tactile input, rather than relying on just one of these types of processing, seems most beneficial, especially when it has been proved, as Gráf (2001: 40) points out, 'that different styles do not exclude each other, and the most successful learners are to be found amongst those who combine different styles'.

Considering that there is a multitude of highly individual cognitive and affective factors which play roles in the learning process, as it was mentioned earlier, any class and especially a large post-secondary class with up to 18 students must necessarily be composed of a number of different individuals, with different personalities, learning styles and preferences. Ideally, the teacher should employ a wide range of techniques, materials and activities in order to cater for all the individual differences and needs.

2.2.3.3 Sociocultural Factors

Another aspect of individual variation lies in the learner's social, cultural and educational background. Although in the context of predominantly monocultural (i.e. composed mostly of Czech students) post-secondary classes the issue of sociocultural differences may seem marginal, the teachers must be aware of the fact that the learners may come from a variety of different layers of society, and may have a correspondingly diverse family, economic and intellectual study conditions as well as a varied range of opinions, stereotypes and attitudes about morality, politics, humour, and similar. The teacher should be sensitive to these nuances and offer topics, materials and practices which will not offend anyone and which will be as varied as possible 'to suit the different individual expectations and tastes' (Harmer 2007a: 20).

Moreover, it should be pointed out that the learner's L1 culture, where 'culture' is understood as an ingrained set of 'attitudes, values, beliefs, norms and behaviours' (Brown 2007: 188) shared by members of the language community, may 'interfere with the acceptance of different cultural [i.e. L2] patterns' (Mothejzíková (1988: 27). This cultural interference may result in the creation of **stereotypes**, that is, fixed ideas 'that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which [are] often not true in reality'[1], which may hamper the learning progress. Although 'there are indeed characteristics [...] that make one culture different from another' (Brown 2007: 192), stereotyping other cultures in class should be avoided and the cultural differences should be respected and appreciated.

[1] http://oald8.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/dictionary/stereotype

Stereotyping usually implies a kind of **attitude** towards certain culture, race, ethnic group, class of people, or language. 'Most of these attitudes are "taught," consciously or unconsciously, by parents, other adults, and peers' (Brown 2007: 71), but they may emerge also from indirect exposure to a L2 culture through television, news and other media. Whereas positive attitudes have a beneficial effect on L2 learning, negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and, consequently, to failure of the learning process. In a classroom setting, these negative attitudes can be changed, for example, by giving learners opportunities to encounter actual persons from the TL culture. However, more crucially, the teacher him/ herself should be the learners' role model of positive attitude and behaviour.

2.2.3.4 Linguistic Factors

Out of the many linguistic variables which could be mentioned here, this chapter will cover merely the influence of the learner's L1 competence on the learning process and the role the learner's level of L2 proficiency plays in course planning and the selection of teaching methods, materials and procedures.

When learning a second or foreign language, the adult, a cognitively mature learner is subject to constant struggle with the knowledge of the mother tongue. 'As a result of this clash between a well developed L1 competence and a slowly emerging L2 competence, the learner will produce L2 utterances according to L1 rules, a tendency which will soon result in the establishment of a faulty interlanguage' (Mothejzíková 1988: 27). This phenomenon is widely known as **interference**, that is, the negative transfer of the native language knowledge on the TL use. Interference certainly is 'the most immediately noticeable source of error among L2 learners' (Brown 2007: 102), especially at lower levels of proficiency. However, it is important to remember that the mother language is often transferred positively, that is, when an L1 item is correctly utilized in a L2 task, in which case the prior L1 experience facilitates the L2 learning process.

The other linguistic factor to be analysed here is the level of learner's L2 proficiency. This is of particular relevance in the context of this thesis,

since adult classes, including post-secondary classes, are usually organised on the basis of the students' language level rather than age. Traditionally, the learner's language competence is categorised into six levels, from virtually no knowledge of the language to the highest degree of L2 proficiency (listed in ascending order): beginner, elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced. Each of these levels may be subdivided and the learner's skills within any particular level may be varied too (e.g. s/he may be better at speaking than writing). Sometimes, a distinction is made between beginners (real beginners) and false beginners, who have some previous learning experience with the TL, but are not really able to use it yet.

Today, there are also other level systems and ways of describing proficiency, for example, ESL Standards developed by the TESOL organisation in the USA or the scale created by the *Council of Europe* as a part of the *Common European Framework of Reference,* which defines language competency in a series of six levels ranging from A1 (roughly equivalent to elementary) to C2 (very advanced) (for details see Chapter 2.3.3.2).

Despite attempts to place students into groups according to their language level, almost 'every class is a mixed level class (Scrivener 2005: 67), be it due to a failure of the placement testing (which usually gives only a general idea of the overall level but does not capture the learner's differences in various language forms and skills), or as a result of the school's inability to provide a sufficient number of class levels.

To conclude, not only must the teacher take into account the mixture of levels in one class, but s/he must also consider the fact that many activities are not universally applicable to all levels. As Harmer exemplifies (2007a: 19), with beginners, for example, it is not effective to 'suggest abstract discussions or the writing of discursive essays' just as with advanced students, it is equally inappropriate to drill basic verb forms. Also, different types of language forms is to be taught: beginners will be exposed to fairly simple grammar and vocabulary, whereas more advanced students will be challenged with more sophisticated structures. The learners' level also affects the teacher's language: with beginners, teachers tend to slow the natural pace of their speech,

'exaggerate [their] voice tone and use gestures to help to get [the] meaning across' (Harmer: ibid.), which is not needed at higher levels.

2.2.4 Teaching Methods and Methodology

2.2.4.1 Key Terminology Defined

Before presenting a historical overview of the most influential teaching methods and FLT theories, it may be desirable to enumerate and define the key terminology to be used in the following chapters, in order to forestall potential terminological confusion or misunderstanding, especially when the terms *approach, method, technique, activity* and *task,* are often interchanged.

Working on the assumption that the above-mentioned key terms are best viewed hierarchically, as suggested by Mothejzíková (1988: 221), it seems logical to start with the superordinate term ***approach***, which Mothejzíková (1988: 222) defines as 'a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language and the nature of language teaching and learning.' An approach, in her opinion, 'states a point of view, a philosophy, an article of faith.' Brown (2000: 16) views an approach as 'theoretically well-informed positions and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language learning and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings.' Harmer (2007b: 62) postulates that 'an approach describes how language is used and how its constituent parts interlock [...], how people acquire their knowledge of the language' and defines the conditions which 'promote successful language learning.' To summarize, an approach is an articulation of one's beliefs about the nature of language, FL acquisition and successful FL learning and teaching.

A step lower on the imaginary hierarchical ladder is the term ***method***, which Scrivener (2005: 38) defines as 'a way of teaching' based on the selected approach, Brown (2000: 16) as an 'approach in action,' Harmer (2007b: 62) as 'the practical realisation of an approach' and Mothejzíková (1988: 223) as 'an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach'. In particular, a method encompasses decisions about the linguistic and subject-matter aims and objectives, the contents, or the syllabus

of a course, the roles of teachers and learners, the teaching material, techniques, procedures and activities to be deployed.

However, it is worth noting that the traditional view of teaching as implementation of a single method is rather outdated mainly due to the fact that contemporary 'methods' take 'procedures and techniques from a wide range of sources' (Harmer 2007b: 62). Brown in his *Teaching by Principles* (2000: 15) describes a current trend to use ***methodology*** instead of method to refer to 'pedagogical practices in general,' whereas the term method tends to mean 'specific, identifiable clusters of theoretically compatible classroom techniques,' which roughly fits the definition of a procedure.

A ***procedure*** is an ordered sequence of techniques, a ***technique*** being a cover term for 'any of a wide variety of exercises, activities or tasks [performed by either teachers or learners] in the language classroom for realizing lesson objectives' (Brown 2000: 16). Techniques are selected and composed into individual lesson plans by the teacher in accordance 'with a method and therefore in harmony with an approach as well' (Mothejzíková 1988: 24).

According to Brown (2000: 129), a classroom ***activity*** refers to 'some sort of active performance on the part of learners,' which is 'limited in time, preceded by some direction from the teacher, [and has] a particular objective'. Examples of activities provided by Brown (ibid.) include 'role-plays, drills, games, peer-editing, small-group information-gap exercises, and much more.' An activity must be distinguished from a ***task***, which is 'a goal-oriented activity which reflects a social purpose and is designed to provide opportunities for communication' (Kretová 2006: 37) and focuses 'on the authentic use of language for meaningful communicative purposes' (Brown 2000: 129).

A clear and straightforward summary of the terminological hierarchy is provided by Gráf (2011: 50), who states that 'methods deploy various techniques and procedures [...] which are designed to aid the acquisition of various language skills within the descriptive framework of the overall approach.'

2.2.4.2 Some Well-known Methods and Approaches

Although the discipline of FL teaching is relatively young, there have been a wide variety of theories, approaches and methods, some in 'total philosophical opposition to others' (Brown 2000: 16) and having an overview of their historical development may be beneficial not only from the diachronic point of view, but also and above all, synchronically, as it can facilitate understanding and evaluating the current principles and trends in FL teaching. Moreover, some of the positive elements from previous methods can be deployed as techniques rather than entire methods, in contemporary teaching methodologies for the students' benefit.

The brief historical sketch presented below does under no circumstances aim to provide a full overview of the development of FLT theories. On the contrary, it concentrates solely on the trends that have had a significant impact on how languages are taught today and are considered relevant to the pedagogical research carried out within the thesis. The term 'method' is used here in the traditional concept of a practical application of an approach unless stated otherwise.

'The interpretations of the best way to teach a foreign language,' and consequently the teaching methods and teaching material based on them 'seem to vary in a cyclical pattern in which a new method emerges about every quarter of a century' (Brown 2000: 16). Since teaching methods are implementation of a theoretical approach as stated above, their advent and eclipse reflect the popularity of the theoretical and philosophical cornerstones they are built on. More specifically, the development of new methods goes hand in hand with the advances in psychological, linguistic and pedagogical theory and research, but also, as Gráf (2011: 53) aptly points out, with 'business interests of publishers.' For obvious commercial reasons, new methods 'are usually proclaimed to be more effective than those that have gone before' (Lightbown & Spada 1993: xiii) and some of them may indeed be ground-breaking and revolutionary; however, the majority simply recycle the elements of the previous practices.

However, the interconnection and interdependence of pedagogical theory and practice is a matter of the last hundred years. As Brown (2000: 18) observes, 'for centuries, there were few if any theoretical foundations of language learning [and acquisition] upon which to base teaching methodology.' Until the end of the 19th century, FL learning in most of Europe was virtually limited to the classical languages of Latin and Greek which were taught by means of the ***Classical Method***, later adopted for teaching other languages as well. For its focus on grammatical rules as the basis for translation it came to be known as the ***Grammar-Translation Method*** (hereinafter only GTM).

The major characteristics of GTM can be summarized as: the emphasis on grammatical accuracy, memorization of long lists of isolated words and grammatical rules, reading and translation of complex texts and disconnected sentences and doing a lot of written exercises. The instruction was conducted mostly in the students' native language, the development of oral communicative skills in the target language was ignored and very little or no attention paid to pronunciation and listening skills.

Undoubtedly, the GTM has been the most widespread and the most influential way of teaching and in some educational contexts it is still practised today. On the other hand, the method has suffered a lot of criticism, mainly because it fails to give learners opportunities to activate their FL knowledge and to communicate effectively with it. Although rejected by many, some 'teachers these days are becoming aware again of how important translation is and how many different functions it may serve, and some of the techniques of the GTM are making a comeback' (Gráf 2011: 51). Harmer (2007a: 49) postulates that language learners 'can learn a lot about a foreign language by comparing parts of it with parts of [their] own mother tongue'. However, as Gráf (2011: 51) aptly concludes, 'more research is needed so that some of the GTM techniques can be pardoned and yet again legitimately become available to any teachers who can use them well.'

According to Brown (2000: 19), the history of 'modern' FLT began in the 1880s when Francois Gouin, a Latin teacher from France, observing how children learned to speak, devised the ***Series Method*** which 'taught learners

directly [i.e. without translation and without grammatical rules and explanations] a 'series' of connected sentences that are easy to perceive' (Brown 2000: 20). However, as early as in 1900 this method was overshadowed by the phenomenal success of the *Direct Method*, which drew on and extended some of Gouin's valuable insights.

The basic principle of the ***Direct Method*** (also known as the ***Berlitz Method,*** after one of its famous popularisers, Charles Berlitz from Germany) was that learning a FL should be more natural, more like learning the mother tongue in childhood. Therefore, the classes were taught exclusively in the TL and translation was strictly prohibited. The teacher and the learners were partners, which supposedly facilitated and stimulated oral and spontaneous use of the language. The emphasis was laid on communication skills, pronunciation and listening comprehension; everyday vocabulary was taught through demonstration and use of objects and pictures and grammar was taught inductively, with very little or no analysis of grammatical rules.

The *Direct Method* enjoyed considerable popularity at private language schools where 'clients were willing to pay high prices for small classes, individual attention, and intensive study' (Brown 2000: 22). In the constrained financial, spatial and time conditions of public education, however, the method was difficult, if not impossible, to apply. By the end of the 1920s the use of the *Direct Method* had declined only to be revived a generation later in the form of audio-lingualism.

The revolutionary ***Audio-Lingual Method*** (ALM) is believed to have originated in the way of teaching used in crash courses organized for US soldiers during WWII. This '***Army Method***,' as it was colloquially called, focused on speaking and listening skills. In the 1960s it was enriched with the findings of behaviourist psychology which suggested that 'learning is the result of habit-formation, where performing the correct response to a stimulus means that a reward is given' (Harmer 2007a: 49) and that by constantly rewarding error-free production 'students could be "conditioned" into learning the language' (ibid.).

A typical ALM class was conducted exclusively in the TL and contained a lot of pattern drills, mimicry, memorization of set phrases and overlearning. Grammar was taught inductively, vocabulary was presented in simple situations exemplifying its usage and great attention was paid to pronunciation. However, the naturalness of the language was disregarded and in fact the class texts were written specifically for the purpose of teaching. Besides this lack of exposition to authentic language the ALM was criticized mainly for its failure to teach natural communicative proficiency. It was discovered that language learning was far more complex than just the formation of language habits and that errors formed a natural part of learning. On a more positive note, Harmer (2007a: 49) observes that 'drilling (choral and individual repetition and cue-response drilling) is still considered a useful technique to use, especially with low-level students.'

In his latest edition of *How to Teach English* (2007a: 49-50), Harmer also mentions a 'modern' equivalent of the ALM, a widely used procedure referred to as ***PPP***, which stands for ***Presentation, Practice*** and ***Production***. In PPP the teacher first presents the context for the grammar, vocabulary or functions to be taught, explains and demonstrates the meaning and form of the new language and makes the learners drill making sentences with the new pattern. The teacher then guides the learners through the production stage in which they talk more freely, utilizing the given pattern as much as possible.

Nevertheless, Harmer (2007a: 50) remarks that PPP is suitable almost exclusively for teaching simple language at lower levels and proposes his own, more widely applicable, trio of teaching sequence elements summarized as *Engage*, *Study* and *Activate* (ESA). In particular, Harmer believes that when students are emotionally engaged or involved (e.g. by music, pictures, or anecdotes), their benefit from studying will be considerably greater. The *Study* stage, focused on the practice of language forms or language functions, may be followed by a personalization phase where learners use the new language to talk about themselves. The last element, activation, includes activities such as role-plays, debates, story and poem writing, designed to make students use the appropriate language freely and communicatively.

Harmer adds that for successful language teaching and learning all three ESA elements need to be present in most lessons, although not necessarily always in the same order, and minutely describes several different ESA teaching sequences depending on the students' level and the focus of the lesson. A '**straight arrows'** (E→S→A) sequence, for instance, is especially suitable for straightforward language at lower levels, whereas for intermediate and advanced levels he recommends a '**boomerang**', or '**test-teach-test**' procedure (E→A→S→A), where the activation comes first, but then the boomerang comes back to teach learners the language used in the task, before activating it again. However, many lessons, especially at higher levels, are composed of a **patchwork** of procedures and mini-procedures providing a balance between study and activation, between the language and the topic.

After this short digression into the present-day ELT I shall return to a period which Brown (2000: 24) calls the 'spirited 1970s'. Brown considers this decade to be of enormous historical significance, mainly because the 'research on second language learning and teaching grew into a discipline in its own right' and because a number of revolutionary '***Designer***' ***Methods***, to use his term, were developed. All these innovations, namely *Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, the Silent Way, Total Physical Response* and *the Natural Approach* were concerned with removing psychological barriers for learning and with reducing the stress which some learners associate with learning a FL in a language class.

In ***Community Language Learning*** (CLL), bilingual teachers acted as counsellors who first assisted the group of students, that is the community, in establishing an interpersonal relationship and trust using their native language, and thus, presumably, facilitated open and free interpersonal communication. The teachers-counsellors then mediated the communication within the community by helping the learners to translate their utterances from L1 into L2 in hope that gradually, they would become able to speak directly in the FL, without translation. The conversations were recorded and at the end of each session the learners attempted together to inductively work out the rules of the new language.

The affective sensitivity of the CLL, its power to alleviate the anxiety associated with speaking in front of others, is an indisputable advantage. Nevertheless, its dependency on the translation skills of the teacher and its over-reliance on an inductive strategy of learning, especially when the initial confusion could be removed by the teacher's more directed guidance, were heavily criticised. And yet, the development of the sense of community can be creatively applied even in today's FLT. Indeed, as Gráf (20011: 51) observes, 'the principles of CLL have recently been adopted in the internet-based social network services – learners form groups where they help each other with their language-learning problems'.

Another 'designer' method of the seventies, ***Suggestopedia,*** or *Desuggestopedia*, was created by Bulgarian psychologist Georgi Lozanov, who, drawing on findings from psychological research on extrasensory perception and from yoga, was convinced that the 'human brain could process great quantities of material if given the right conditions for learning, among which are a state of relaxation and giving over of control to the teacher' (Brown 2000: 27). The desired states of 'relaxed concentration' were to be achieved mainly by establishing a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom, for instance by seating students in soft, comfortable seats and playing soothing music when, for example presenting new vocabulary or reading a text.

According to Brown (2000: 28), *Suggestopedia*, like the other 'designer' methods, 'became a business enterprise of is own, [but its advertising] was not completely supported by research'. Moreover, due to its specific requirements on classroom furniture and equipment, the method was highly impractical and, in certain educational environments, totally impracticable. Like the ALM, *Suggestopaedia* focused on memorization techniques and failed to teach real communicative proficiency. Yet it is obvious that relaxed states of consciousness, deliberately induced, for example, by listening to music, may be, occasionaly, used for the learners' benefit.

Caleb Cattegno, the author of the ***Silent Way*** (SW), was convinced that language learning was more effective if the learner was guided to discover the rules of a language cognitively by solving language problems rather than

simply by memorizing and repeating. The SW thus promoted the development of learners' autonomy and active participation in the learning process. The teacher's main role was to set the tasks and provide brief stimuli, but for most of the time the teacher, as the name of the method implies, remained silent. Vocabulary, pronunciation models, grammatical paradigms, etc. were introduced by means of Cuisenaire rods – small coloured rods of varying lengths – and a series of colourful wall charts. However, the lack of teacher's guidance and corrective feedback did not lead to effective development of communication skills. Nevertheless, discovery-learning activities, students' autonomy in learning and reducing teacher talk are principles still valid today.

James Asher, another 1970s method 'designer', based his ***Total Physical Response*** (TPR) on two assumptions inspired by contemporary psychological theories of learning. First, that foreign languages are acquired in a way similar to a child learning their L1; and second, that memory could be stimulated by physical activity. As a result, 'similarly to children, who learn the language by listening and doing [i.e. 'responding' physically]' (Gráf 2011: 52), TPR learners first only listened to and carried out instructions from the teacher without being required to speak. Only when they felt comfortable enough could they start giving commands for the others to act them out. The TPR was especially effective with beginner and lower-level students. However, 'as learners advanced in their competence' and after they 'overcame the fear of speaking out, classroom conversations and other activities proceeded as in almost any other communicative language classroom' (Brown 2000: 30).

The delay of oral production until learners feel ready was advocated also by Stephen Krashen, the author of the ***Natural Approach*** (NA). At the initial stage of language learning, the so-called 'silent period', learners were provided with 'comprehensible input,' that is, 'spoken language understandable to the learner' (Brown 2000: 31) and they were not forced to speak until the speech 'naturally' emerged. The NA aimed to develop learners' basic personal communication skills and therefore made extensive use of role-playing everyday language situations, pair and small-group discussions, games as well as TPR activities, especially during the 'silent period'. Despite its evident positive effects on the development of students' self-confidence, its advocacy

of the ‘silent period’ and its heavy emphasis on comprehensible input remain the most controversial aspects of this approach.

After the decline of the innovative methods of the 1970s, a number of courses and textbooks were compiled according to a ***Notional-functional Syllabus*** (NFS), where the language was organized pragmatically, that is, by the purpose for which it could be used, as opposed to a structural syllabus arranged around grammatical structures. All the tasks in the textbook, including dialogues, role-plays and information-gap activities, were aimed at practising language functions such as greeting, apologizing, or asking for directions. Nevertheless, as NFS was not a method, which would specify how to teach, but merely a syllabus presenting language as an inventory of units, it did not necessarily develop learners’ communicative skills.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) or ***Communicative Approach*** (CA) is ‘perhaps the method or approach that most contemporary teachers would subscribe to, despite that fact that it is widely misunderstood and misapplied’ (Scrivener 2005: 38). As its name implies, the CLT’s primary goal is for students to acquire communicative competence, mainly by means of participating in meaningful communication. Harmer (2007a: 56) lists two basic premises of CLT: first, that language is not only grammar and vocabulary, but also involves language functions such as apologizing, agreeing and disagreeing, complaining, etc. In other words, language forms are simply a tool to communicate the content. The second principle is that in order to learn to communicate with the language, students need enough exposure to authentic language and plenty of opportunities to use the language in lifelike activities.

Scrivener (2005: 38-39) distinguishes between a stronger and a weaker version of CLT: in ‘strong CLT’ students learn by communicating real messages instead of grammatically controlled language, fluency is given priority over accuracy and explicit teaching and traditional practice exercises are largely limited. In ‘weak CLT’ on the other hand, ‘students learn through a wide variety of teaching, exercises, activities and study, with a bias towards speaking and listening work. Most current coursebooks reflect a version of weak CLT (ibid.).

Task-Based Learning (TBL), an extension of CLT, is based on 'the preparation for, doing of, and reflective analysis of tasks that reflect real-life needs and skills' (Scrivener 2005: 39). Like CLT, it puts the emphasis on the performance of lifelike communicative tasks such as asking for and giving directions, shopping, making presentations, etc., rather than the language itself.

2.2.4.3 Contemporary Teaching Methodologies

Having outlined the historical development of the most influential teaching methods and trends, a brief commentary on contemporary FLT methodologies should be provided. Several authors observe that teaching by a single clearly articulated method with fixed procedures belongs to the past and that current teaching should be a judicious compilation of the best elements of a number of different theories and methods described above. In particular, Harmer (2007b: 78) believes that 'we have reached a **post-method** phase' and that what is needed 'is not alternative methods, but an alternative to method.' Scrivener (2005: 40) maintains that most practitioners seem to have their own personal methodology, a collage of 'items from a range of methods and constructions,' widely known as **principled eclecticism**. Brown (2000: 39) also admits that 'method, as a unified, cohesive, finite set of design features, is now given only minor attention' and adds that 'the diversity of language learners in multiple worldwide contexts demands an **eclectic** blend of tasks, each tailored for a particular group of learners in a particular place, studying for particular purposes in a given amount of time.'

At the same time, Harmer (2007a: 51) warns that, unless approached in a responsible and principled way, lessons based on such eclecticism may 'become a disorganized ragbag of different activities with no obvious coherence or philosophy to underpin them.' As a result, Harmer (2007b: 78–79, as summarized by Gráf 2011: 53) lists the following six key concepts to be adhered to (when developing one's own personal methodology: (1) affect (taking into account students' feelings and attitudes), (2) input (constant exposure to the target language, and focus on form especially in the initial stages), (3) output (employing meaning-focused tasks so that students can activate what they have learnt), (4) cognitive effort (developing metacognition

and learning about how language works), (5) grammar and lexis (and showing how they combine), (6) how, why and where (knowing what we want to achieve, who our students are and in what context we teach and learn).

Other strategies for successful language learning, as suggested by Kumaravadivelu (cited in Harmer 2007b: 78) include 'maximizing learning opportunities,' promoting meaningful interaction, fostering learner autonomy, developing language awareness, 'contextualizing linguistic input, integrating language skills, ensuring social relevance [and] raising cultural consciousness.'

To summarize, whereas teaching methods in the past were either teacher-centred (GTM) or language-centred (e.g. ALM), nowadays, there is a clear trend for teaching to be **learner-centred**, that is, focusing on the needs of the learners and involving them in the teaching process. In the historical development of teaching methods we can also observe a gradual shift of emphasis from language forms (e.g. the GTM's focus on grammar and vocabulary) over language skills (e.g. in CLT) to language functions (especially NFS). The current concepts of post-method pedagogy or principled eclecticism aim at a balanced practice and development of all language forms and skills, with a particular emphasis on giving learners an opportunity to use their language knowledge in meaningful communicative tasks, rather than on purely mechanical practice, although accuracy is not to be disregarded either.

2.2.5 Textbooks and Other Teaching Materials

Any lesson would be only an incoherent mixture of techniques, procedures and tasks if not backed up by a good textbook. The textbook can of course be enhanced with a wide range of supplements, such as audio, video and computer resources, and the teacher can make use of the 'almost unlimited supply of real-world material' (Brown 2000: 141) like posters, magazine pictures, photos and other illustrations, as well as real-life objects, to help students connect language to reality; yet it is the textbook which has been, and still is, the principal tool in a FL classroom. Since choosing a suitable textbook is a complex task, this chapter will, together with a list of functions the textbook serves, present an overview of criteria for textbook evaluation.

2.2.5.1 Textbook Functions

Apparently, there are teachers who reject the use of textbooks and resort to preparing their own teaching materials, but such a 'do-it-yourself' approach (Harmer 2007b: 182) is very time-consuming, extremely demanding on the teacher's methodological skills and rather risky too, since it may easily result in a chaotic collection of heterogeneous material. Fortunately, the widely held opinion is that the textbook, or coursebook, has an irreplaceable position in the learning/ teaching process, especially with adolescent and adult learners, who are, thanks to their previous school experience, used to having textbooks as an essential learning aid.

The textbook has many advantages both from the learner's and the teacher's point of view. In her diploma thesis *Interdisciplinary Relations in Basic English Textbooks for Basic Schools*, Kretová (2006: 14-16) cites a number of scholars, including Billows, Grant, Hendrich, Průcha and Ur, whose arguments in favour of textbook use can be summarized as follows: the textbook is a systematic and coherent guide for the teacher and the learner alike, it serves as the basis for syllabus and lesson planning and it facilitates monitoring the learner's progress. It is the most convenient and most economical source of texts and learning tasks of the appropriate level and, in most cases, it is visually very attractive, which can have a powerful motivating effect. Good textbooks, moreover, are supplemented with plenty of appealing extra material, such as CDs, DVDs, CD-ROMs and online resources, and thus have large in-class as well as out-of-class learning potential.

Having outlined the benefits of textbook use, it must be acknowledged that there are also some drawbacks. For instance, the textbook has not been written with one particular learner or class in mind, so the content, or its part, may not always be relevant to the interests and needs of the class or individual learners. Also, textbooks often have an unvaried format, which may be tedious and demotivating and an uncritical use of a book may create a kind of 'book dependency' in both the learner and the teacher.

As the last point implies, a modern teacher should not follow the textbook page by page, line by line, no matter how good the book may be, but

rather use it as a basic, but not the only teaching instrument and to apply all his/ her theoretical knowledge, practical experience and creativity to modify the textbook, for instance, by 'adding, re-writing, replacing, re-ordering, reducing, and adapting' (Harmer 2007b: 183) the tasks and activities so that the students are offered a dynamic and varied programme, which, if relevant to their own needs, 'will greatly enhance their motivation' (Harmer 2007b: 182).

2.2.5.2 Textbook Evaluation

One of the primary roles of FL teachers is to choose appropriate teaching materials for their students, so every responsible teacher should not only get to know a range of different textbooks available on the market but should also have a good knowledge of the basic evaluation methods to be able to test the qualities of the rival books in a professional way.

As hinted at in the introduction to this chapter, textbook selection is a highly complicated task, as Kretová (2006: 18) points out, mainly due to 'the high degree of the commercialization of the educational textbook market,' on which publishing houses compete 'for attention of the users by all accessible means' (ibid.). As to legislation, the Czech textbook market is largely unregulated; in fact, the only official state intervention exists in the form of a 'list of textbooks and teaching tests approved by an approval clause,' (*seznam učebnic a textů, kterým byla udělena schvalovací doložka*) which is annually renewed and 'published in the Journal of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports'[2] (*Věstník Ministerstva školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy*). This document, however, has mainly an advisory role and is not binding neither for state-run nor private language schools, so the final decision on which textbook/s to utilize is always made by the academic management of the particular school.

For the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the various books on offer, Harmer (2007a: 154) suggests making a list of evaluation criteria in the form of questions, which has been adapted into Table 1 below.

[2] Act No. 561/ 2004 Coll. (*the Education Act*), Section 27, Article 1

Table 1: Textbook Analysis Checklist

Areas for consideration	Possible questions
Price and availability	How much does the coursebook cost? Will the students have to buy any extra material (workbook, etc.)? Are all the components (coursebook, workbook, teacher's guide, audio, etc.) available? What about other levels? Is this good value for money? How much does the whole package (all the components) cost?
Add-ons and extras	Apart from a workbook, what other extras are offered with the course? Are there internet sites with extra material (exercises, texts, etc.), or with 'meeting places' for users? What else does the publisher offer to support the course? What value should we place on the extras that are available?
Layout and design	Is the book attractive? Is its design appropriate for a) the students, and b) the teacher? Does the design of the book make it easy to follow?
Instructions	Are the instructions clear and un ambiguous? Are they written in language that the students will understand? Can the coursebook be used by students working on their own, or is a teacher necessary to show them how to use it?
Methodology	What kind of teaching and learning does the coursebook promote? Is there a good balance between study and activation? How do the authors appear to think that people learn languages and do we agree with them?
Syllabus	Is the syllabus appropriate for our students? Does it cover the language areas (grammar, vocabulary, functions, pronunciation, etc.) that we would expect? Do we and our students like the sequencing of language and topics, etc.? does the coursebook build in a feeling of progress?
Language skills	Does the coursebook have the appropriate balance of skills? Is the skills work really designed to promote the skills (e.g. writing-for-writing, not writing-for-learning)? Are there possibilities for both study and activation in the skills areas? Are the skills activities likely to engage students?
Topics	Does the book contain a variety of topics? On balance, are the topics appropriate for the kind of students who will be using the coursebook? Are the topics likely to engage the students?
Cultural appropriacy	Is the material appropriate for the cultural situation that the students are in? Do the texts contain culturally insensitive material? Are the activities appropriate for the learning culture? Is the coursebook unprejudiced in the way it deals with different customs, ethnicities, races and sexes?
Teacher's guide	Does the coursebook have an accompanying teacher's guide? Is it easy to use? Does it explain things clearly? Does it offer alternatives to the coursebook activities? Does it have all the answers that teachers and students need? Does it provide differentiated activities for fast and slow learners?

Brown, in his *Teaching by Principles* also uses questions as evaluation descriptors in his 12-point guide (adapted from Brown 2000: 142), which covers areas similar to those in the Checklist compiled by Harmer:

1. Will this textbook help to accomplish the **goals** of the course?
2. Does the book fit the learners' **background**, including age, L1 language and culture, education and reason for learning English?
3. Does the theoretical **approach** of the book reflect a philosophy that the teacher, the institution and the students can easily identify with?
4. Does the book integrate the four **skills** (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)? Is there a balanced approach towards the skills?
5. Is the **content** of the book valid, authentic, appropriate and up-to-date? Is it pitched for the right level?
6. In the **practice material**, is there a variety from controlled to free? Are the instructions clear? Does it encourage active participation of students? Is linguistic explanation inductive or deductive? Are there sufficient review exercises?
7. Is it **sequenced** by grammatical structures, by skills, by situations or by a combination of the above?
8. Does the book pay sufficient attention to words and **word study** with respect to relevance, frequency and strategies for word analysis?
9. What about the general **sociolinguistic factors**, such as the variety of English (American, British, or international)? Is there a cultural bias?
10. Is the book's **format** attractive, usable and durable? Is the typesetting clear? Does it use special notation (phonetic symbols, stress, intonation marking, etc.)? Are the illustrations clear and of high quality and clarity? Is the general layout comfortable and not too 'busy'? What about the size of the book and binding and quality of editing? Is there an index, table of contents or chapter headings?
11. Are there useful **supplementary materials** such as workbook, audio or video material, posters, flash cards, tests?
12. Is the **teacher's guide** useful? Does it provide methodological guidance, alternative and supplementary exercises, answer keys? Is it suitable for non-native speaking teachers?

Considering these criteria, it can be concluded that a good textbook should: be consistent with the goal of the course and with the theoretical approach adopted, be systematic and coherent, offer a cumulative syllabus, cover all the language forms needed for the given level in a balanced way, integrate all four language skills, give opportunities to activate the language knowledge in meaningful communicative tasks, contain varied, engaging authentic material appropriate to the learners' sociocultural background, age and interests, have an attractive, easy-to-follow layout, be supplemented with various extra resources suitable for self-study outside the class, including computer and online practice, provide a detailed methodological guide (teacher's book) with an answer key, instructions for and alternatives to the tasks in the student's book and all this at a reasonable, affordable price.

2.2.5.3 Textbooks and Cultural Competence

Although touched upon in the evaluation criteria above, it has not yet been emphasized enough that nowadays, L2 textbooks, or at least their supplementary material, should aim at developing not only the learners' basic language skills like listening or reading, but also their cross- or inter-cultural competence, which is indispensable in order to fully understand the target language and to be able to interact appropriately within the TL culture, while preserving one's own cultural identity.

Culture can be defined in a variety of ways. Brown (2007: 188), for example, defines culture as 'the context within which we exist, think, feel, and relate to others,' as 'our collective identity.' Mothejzíková (cited in Kretová: 45) views culture as 'the way of life of the TL nation' and Gill & Čaňková (2003: 1) claim that 'culture, in its widest sense, refers to everything related to the customs, institutions and achievements of a country, group or community.'

In FLT there are two widely accepted types of culture: *capital*, or *big 'C' culture* and *small 'c' culture*. Whereas the former, sometimes referred to as 'high' culture, subsumes the most visible forms of culture such as 'the art, music and literature of a country or ethnic group' and may thus be exemplified by 'its achievements such as the plays of Shakespeare, the Mona Lisa, the Taj Mahal [or] Beethoven's symphonies' (Gill & Čaňková 2003: 1); the latter

'refers to our 'everyday' culture' (ibid.) and includes, for example, the customs and traditions of the TL community, the organization of their family life, typical meals and drinks, typical leisure activities, the community's social, economic and educational systems, cultural norms, but also characteristics like sense of humour and style of clothing.

The principal source of information on the various components of the TL culture should be the textbook itself – it should contain authentic material such as timetables, leaflets, cultural guides, posters, maps, etc. Moreover, the book may be accompanied by a separate resource book covering relevant cultural topics as well as a set of DVDs or interactive CD-ROMs presenting the TL culture in an engaging and attractive way. If feasible, the teacher could also bring a range of realia (real-life objects) into the class, such as food items, calendars and newspapers. Learners' culture awareness may be raised also through lectures prepared by the teacher or, even better, through presentations or mini-studies prepared by the students themselves, in which they would combine, as Kretová (2006: 51) remarks, factual knowledge, linguistic skills with organizational and rhetoric abilities.

Learners can be exposed to the TL culture also via suitable cinema and theatre performances. In Prague, for example, *English Theatre* and *Prague Playhouse* theatre groups perform adaptations of literary classics in English at times convenient for educational purposes (see Useful Websites in Bibliography and References for details). Since actual face-to-face encounters are the most effective, the teacher may also, if possible, invite native guest speakers and organize whole-class discussions. Another real-life experience with the TL culture is, of course, making a trip to a region where TL is spoken.

2.2.5.4 Graded Readers

Another essential part of FLT, although frequently neglected, is systematic fostering of learners' interest in reading in the TL, since reading is indispensable not only for understanding textbooks, dictionaries and teacher's instructions, but also, primarily, for the expansion of vocabulary and the consolidation of the grammar learnt in class. This habit of reading can be developed, besides the texts in coursebooks, by means of Graded Readers (or

simply Readers), that is, books which were specially written or abridged and simplified from existing books with the aim to provide FL learners with material that is meaningful, enjoyable and accessible to their level.

Graded Readers are available for different ages, ability levels and interests, from pre-school children to adults, from beginners (using simple grammar, the most frequent vocabulary and a lot of picture support) to very advanced learners (with more complex grammatical structures, a larger range of vocabulary and fewer illustrations) and from various genres of fiction (e.g. drama, romance, crime, science fiction, historical fiction, or literary classics) to non-fiction such as biographies, travelogues, factual reports and similar.

The invaluable merit of Graded Readers is that they can be used in numerous ways both in and out of class and they can promote the development of a variety of language skills, not only the 'macro' and 'micro' skills of reading as many teachers wrongly assume. Rob Waring in his article *Getting the most out of your Readers*[3] suggests an abundance of activities focused on writing, speaking as well as listening skills. Writing, for instance, may be practised in the form of book reviews, diaries of or imaginary letters to characters in the stories or learners can write questions about the reading for others to answer or compose a play based on the story together.

Speaking, on the other hand, may be stimulated by organizing discussion sessions on the reading or encouraging learners to re-tell the story. Many Graded Readers are also accompanied by audio CDs or cassettes, which are usually recordings of the book made by professional actors and as such serve as a model of correct pronunciation and a range of various accents. Moreover, although most Readers contain a glossary of words uncommon for the given level, they are also a natural way of improving dictionary skills.

Overall, Graded Readers intend to promote the active participation of learners and thus usually contain a lot of exercises and comprehension questions, and their publishers produce large amounts of free support materials for the teachers, including tests, role-plays and games.

[3] Available from http://elt.oup.com/teachers/readers/gettingthemost?cc=global&selLanguage=en&mode=hub#chapter5

2.3 Post-Secondary Language Courses in the CR

The term *one-year post-secondary study of languages* (jednoleté pomaturitní studium jazyků) and its variations is within the scope of this thesis to be understood as a one-year language course with twenty 45-minute lessons a week, carried out in accordance with *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll. on Further Study* and other acts and decrees specified in Chapter 2.3.2 by educational institutions listed in Appendix No. 1 to the aforementioned decree.

2.3.1 History of Post-Secondary Courses in the CR

Historically, post-secondary language study was established in the early 1990s with the aim to provide prospective university students with the necessary language education and to enable those who were not admitted to a university upon completion of their secondary studies to spend the gap year before reapplying in a meaningful way. This solution to the critical lack of language skills among the majority of the population was truly unique. As the research done within this thesis shows, no comparable courses were established in the post-communist countries, or at least not in the countries of the Visegrád Group, and one-year post-secondary language courses thus became Czechoslovak and later the Czech and Slovak FLT phenomenon.

In an attempt to provide a reliable overview of the historical development of post-secondary language education in the Czech Republic, I have encountered a major obstacle, namely that statistical data, be it from *Český statistický úřad* (the Czech Statistical Office), *Ústav pro informace ve vzdělávání* (the Institute for Information on Education) or *Výzkumný ústav pedagogický* (the Research Institute of Education) are insufficient and incomplete. Before 1996, one-year language courses were not statistically monitored at all. Between 1989 and 2003, although there are overall statistics on the total number of state language schools (which fluctuated between 27 and 37), it was not recorded how many of them actually organized post-secondary courses. Based on the fragmentary data summarized in Table 2 it can be observed that the number of private language schools providing post-secondary language courses grew geometrically until 2010/11, whereas the number of state-regulated schools has been gradually decreasing.

Table 2: Post-secondary Courses in the CR between 1996/97 and 2011/12[4]

	Private language schools	Language schools authorised to organise state language examinations	Students at private language schools	Students at language schools with state language examinations
1996/97	16	N/A	1,075	2,486
1997/98	57	N/A	5,533	2,823
1998/99	77	N/A	6,413	2,772
1999/2000	106	N/A	8,613	2,857
2000/01	83	N/A	1,467	2,653
2001/02	87	N/A	6,144	2,380
2002/03	105	N/A	5,812	2,351
2003/04	111	27	6,237	2,091
2004/05	100	25	5,753	1,975
2005/06	112	25	4,843	1,416
2006/07	115	25	4,931	1,250
2007/08	113	23	4,577	893
2008/09	107	19	4,429	793
2009/10	116	17	4,221	744
2010/11	115	17	4,743	657
2011/12	103	15	4,458	601

2.3.2 Legislative Framework

As can be seen from the table above, one-year post-secondary courses of foreign languages are carried out by two types of entities: language schools authorised to organise state language examinations (*jazyková škola s právem státní jazykové zkoušky*), formerly known as state language schools, which are regulated by *Decree No. 33/2005 Coll., on Language Schools Authorised to Organize State Language Examinations and on State Language Examinations,* and which are recorded in *Rejstřík škol a školských zařízení* (Register of Schools and School Facilities) and by legal and natural persons listed in Appendix No. 1 to *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll. on Further Study*. In other words, post-secondary courses are run by educational institutions falling within the regulation of *Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy* (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, hereinafter only MEYS), and independent commercial language schools. The scope of this thesis is limited to the latter.

[4] Adapted from: *Ústav pro informace ve vzdělávání (*Institute for Information on Education), http://www.uiv.cz/clanek/445/1803, http://www.uiv.cz/clanek/437/423

The legislation regulating one-year language courses at private language schools is somewhat chaotic and non-transparent. The courses are affected by a number of different regulations, issued partly by MEYS and partly by the *Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí* (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, hereinafter referred to as MoLSA). Nevertheless, one integrated legal regulation does not exist. Below is an overview of currently valid acts, decrees and orders, arranged chronologically. For Czech titles of the documents see Bibliography and References, section Legislation, located at the end of the thesis.

***Act No. 117/1995 Coll.**, on State Social Support* (Article 15);

***Act No. 155/1995 Coll.**, on Pension Insurance, as Amended by Act No. 220/2011 Coll.* (Article 108);

***Act No. 561/2004 Coll.**, on Pre-primary, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education* (hereinafter referred to as *Education Act*);

***Act No. 563/2004 Coll.**, on Pedagogical Staff and on the Amendment to Some Other Acts, as subsequently Amended* (hereinafter only *Act No. 563/2004 Coll., on Pedagogical Staff*);

MEYS ***Decree No. 16/2005 Coll.**, on Organization of School Year;*

***Decree** of the MEYS and MoLSA **No. 322/2005 Coll.**, on Further Study, or Instruction, which for the Purposes of State Social Support and Pension Insurance Are Considered as Study at Secondary Schools or Higher Education Institutions, as subsequently amended, and on Inclusion of Educational Institutions in the Decree* (hereinafter only *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll., on Further Study*);

***Decree** of the MEYS and the Ministry of Health **No. 410/2005 Coll.**, on Hygiene Requirements of the Premises and Operation of Equipment and Facilities for Education of Children and Youth, as Subsequently Amended;*

***Order** of the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports **No. 12/2010**, Setting the Procedure for Including Educational Institutions and Language Courses in the Appendices to Decree No. 322/2005 Coll., on Further Study,*

and for their Withdrawing from these Appendices (hereinafter only *Order No. 12/2010 on Including Educational Institutions in Appendix No. 1*);

MEYS ***Decree No. 252/2010 Coll.****, amending MEYS Decree No. 322/2005 Coll. on Further Study*; and

MEYS ***Decree No. 28/2012 Coll.****, on Further Study, or Instruction, which for the Purposes of State Social Support and Pension Insurance Are Considered as Study at Secondary Schools*, repealing *MEYS Decree No. 322/2005 Coll.* with effect from 1 September 2012 (hereinafter only *Decree No. 28/2012 Coll., on Further Study*).

The relevant regulations are treated in detail in the following subchapters. Besides governmental legislation, commercial schools affiliated in the association of language schools described in Chapter 2.3.2.4 are bound by the codes and standards issued by the associations.

2.3.2.1 Legal Requirements on Post-secondary Courses

As mentioned above, one-year post-secondary language courses can be organized only by language schools authorised to organise state language examinations and private educational institutions listed in Appendix No. 1 to *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll., on Further Study*. In order to be inserted in the Appendix, schools must prove that their post-secondary courses meet the criteria enumerated in Appendix No. 1 to *Order No. 12/2010 on Including Educational Institutions in Appendix No. 1*.

The order specifies, among others, that the post-secondary course is a course with a day form of education which lasts one school year, with at least four 45-minute lessons a day, five days a week. The organization of the school year is analogous to that at secondary schools set by *Decree No. 16/2005 Coll., on Organization of School Year,* treated in detail in subsection 2.3.2.2 below.

The maximum number of students in one class is 18 and course organizers are obligated to provide the necessary premises, material and technical equipment adequate to the expected number of participants, including sanitary conditions in accordance with *Act No. 258/2000 Coll., on Public Health Protection and on Amendment of Certain Acts, as Subsequently*

Amended and *Decree No. 410/2005 Coll., on Hygiene Requirements of the Premises and Operation of Equipment and Facilities for Education of Children and Youth, as Subsequently Amended*.

The order further specifies that the course must be taught by persons meeting the criteria for professional and pedagogical qualification set in *Act No. 563/2004 Coll., on Pedagogical Staff* (see below). The instruction carried out by these persons may be supplemented by conversation classes, which may be taught also by persons who are native speakers of the taught language, provided that they have completed at least secondary education.

All teachers in post-secondary courses are required to fill in the Class Register Book on a daily basis, which records students' attendance and gives an overview of the materials used. On completion of the course, all participants who meet the criterion of 75% attendance receive a standard certificate SEVT 49 730 1 *Osvědčení o absolvování jednoletého jazykového kursu* (Certificate of Completion of One-year Language Course) issued by the course organizer.

The application for inclusion of a post-secondary course in Appendix No. 1 to *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll., on Further Study* must include the information on the languages to be taught, the range of course levels to be offered and the type of final examination to be taken, all of which are decided by the organizer of the course; any change of these details must be reported to and approved by the MEYS. Annually, the legal or natural person organizing post-secondary courses must submit statistical report no. S 18-01 *O jazykové škole* (On Language School) to the MEYS.

Educational institutions not meeting or infringing the aforementioned conditions and institutions not organizing the course for two consecutive years will be withdrawn from the Appendix. There is no legal right to the inclusion of an entity in the Appendix and the inclusion in the Appendix does not entitle the organizer of the course to claim subsidies from the state budget.

According to the latest data from *Decree No. 252/2010 Coll., amending MEYS Decree No. 322/2005 Coll., on Further Study*, as of 1 September 2010, there were 204 legal and natural subjects entitled to provide this form of study.

2.3.2.2 Organization of the School Year

The organisation of school time is set down by the *Education Act* and by *Decree No. 16/2005 Coll., on Organization of School Year,* which fixes the length and dates of the school year and of school holidays, and by *Order No. 12/2010 on Including Educational Institutions in Appendix No. 1,* which determines the number of lessons in a week.

In accordance with the *Education Act*, the school year at secondary schools and consequently in one-year language courses, starts on September 1 and finishes on August 31 of the following calendar year. 'It is divided into teaching periods and holiday periods, the latter specified by ministerial decree.'[5] School holidays include autumn holidays, Christmas holidays, mid-term holidays, one-week spring holidays the timing of which varies according to the school's location, Easter holidays and summer holidays, which last, in principle, from July 1 to August 31.

The weekly and daily timetable is set by *Order No. 12/2010 on Including Educational Institutions in Appendix No. 1,* which determines that the instruction is carried out five days a week, from Monday to Friday, and there are at least four 45-minute lessons per day. The beginning and end of the lessons is decided by the organizer of the course.

2.3.2.3 Pedagogical Staff

The requirements for professional and pedagogical qualification imposed on language teachers at language schools authorised to organise state language examinations are stipulated in Section 12 of *Act No. 563/2004 Coll., on Pedagogical Staff*. The same conditions apply also to language teachers at secondary schools and consequently, to teachers in one-year language courses at private language schools.

In particular, the act specifies that in order to be considered professionally and pedagogically qualified, the teachers must acquire a master's degree: 'a) in the field of pedagogical sciences focused on educating teachers of foreign languages; or b) in the field of social sciences focused on foreign languages and through higher education by completing an accredited

[5] *Organisation of the Education System in the Czech Republic* (2008/09): 130

bachelor's study programme in the field of pedagogical sciences, by completing a life-long learning programme organised by a higher education institution and focused on education, or by studying pedagogy,'[6] where 'studying pedagogy' means completing an accredited educational programme organised by an institution for further education of pedagogical staff 'in the scope of at least 120 hours with the content focus on pedagogy, psychology, and didactics.'[7] The only exception follows from *Order No. 12/2010 on Including Educational Institutions in Appendix No. 1*, which lowers the minimum qualification requirement for native speakers of the taught language teaching in supplementary conversation classes to at least secondary education.

2.3.2.4 Student Status

The participants in one-year post-secondary language courses maintain the status of secondary school students and as such have health and orphan's pension insurance and are eligible for state social support benefits, provided they meet the criteria specified in *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll. on Further Study*.

In particular, Section 1, subsection a) of the decree specifies that for the purposes of state social support and pension insurance, secondary school status is maintained by the persons with secondary education who pass their first *Maturita* exam (i.e. the school-leaving exam) or graduate from a conservatoire (*absolutorium*) in the same calendar year in which they commence the study in one-year courses of foreign languages with day form of education carried out by legal or natural entities listed in Appendix No. 1 to this decree.

However, this legislation will be valid only until 1 September 2012, when its amendment, *Decree No. 28/2012 Coll., on Further Study*, comes into force. In the amendment, passed on 17 January 2012, the above-cited subsection is omitted. As a result, the participants in one-year post-secondary courses at state-regulated as well as private language schools will be deprived of the status of secondary school student and consequently, of the state social support. In practice this means that, although the courses will still exist, their cost will increase considerably, which in the environment of market economy

[6] *Act No. 563/2004 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff*, Section 12 (English version)
[7] *Act No. 563/2004 Coll. on Pedagogical Staff*, Section 22 (English version)

entails a significant drop in clients. In accordance with the transitional provisions of the new decree, post-secondary studies commenced in the school year 2012/13 will be the last to be considered as studies at secondary schools.

2.3.2.5 Associations of Language Schools

Although not so unrestrained and uncoordinated as in the early 1990s, the area of commercial language teaching is still largely uncontrolled and unregulated. Only a few years ago, the first associations of language schools were established with the aim to improve and supervise the quality of language education for the joint benefit of the schools and their students. Two major professional associations dedicated to language education in the Czech Republic are *Asociace certifikovaných jazykových škol* (the Association of Certified Language Schools), commonly abbreviated as ACERT and *Asociace jazykových škol a agentur ČR* (the Association of Language Schools and Agencies), hereinafter referred to as AJŠA. They affiliate 52 high-quality language schools in total, which cover an absolute majority of the language education market in the country.

ACERT was founded in 2003 with the aim to monitor the quality of its members' tuition, tutorial staff and facilities, provide professional training for its members as well as experts from the public, observe professional ethics, communicate with the media and make comments on legislation concerning language education in the Czech Republic. Each of its 16 member schools must meet the criteria for membership set in the Charter and undergo regular inspections verifying their fulfilment.

AJŠA, registered in 2005, is an association grouping 36 language schools which meet the methodological and linguistic criteria set by the association. The AJŠA Code of Quality, binding for all its members, 'focuses on five areas – professionalism, teacher qualifications, methodology, transparent references and instruction carried out in accordance with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.*'[8]

[8] Extracted from http://www.czechmarketplace.cz/en/5087.channel-crossing-becomes-a-member-of-ajsa-association-of-language-schools-and-agencies-cr

2.3.3 Curricular Documents

Although one-year post-secondary courses organized by private educational institutions are not directly regulated by any curricular document issued by the MEYS, it may be beneficial to outline, however briefly, the development of the education reform which has been going on in the Czech education system since the 1990s, as it indirectly affects these courses too.

2.3.3.1 Czech Curricular Documents

The key feature characterizing the development of education policy in the Czech Republic after 1989 was a gradual decentralization and liberalization of the education system, which culminated in the 'Curricular Reform' introducing 'a new system of curricular documents for the education of pupils between 3 and 19 years of age.'[9] Unlike traditional syllabi, identical for all schools throughout the country and thus necessarily based on average teaching conditions and average levels of pupils' knowledge, the new curricular documents reflect the teaching conditions and composition of pupils at individual schools and can be tailored and adjusted in order to suit the changing needs and interests of the pupils.

The preparation stage of the current curricular reform took place in the mid and late 1990s and resulted in the formulation of *Národní program rozvoje vzdělávání v České republice (National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic*) - the so-called *Bílá kniha* (White Paper), a document which sets the principles of curricular politics applicable to education as a whole. The actual reform started in 2004, when *rámcové vzdělávací program*y (Framework Education Programmes, FEPs) for pre-school and primary education were ratified. These were followed by FEPs for secondary education, education at language schools authorised to organise state language examination and for other forms of education at state-run institutions. In accordance with the principles formulated in the respective FEPs, in 2005 state schools of all stages commenced to develop their *školní vzdělávací programy* (School Education Programmes, SEPs), on the basis of which the actual instruction at their school is implemented.

[9] FEP for Secondary General Education (Grammar Schools): 5 (English version)

Curricular documents at both state and school level represent a shift towards a new educational strategy which emphasises the development of key competences such as communicative competence, social competence, the ability to learn and other capabilities, skills, and 'personality characteristics which enable an individual to act adequately and effectively in various work and life situations' (White paper: 55). A precondition for the development of these competences is a radical change in the style of teaching, from content-oriented to action-oriented, since the competences are based on activities, not on encyclopaedic knowledge. Other prerequisites stipulated in the curricular documents are, for instance, individual approach to pupils, active engagement of pupils in the educational process and promotion of life-long learning.

As far as FL instruction is concerned, the curricular documents of all levels emphasize an increasing importance of communicative competence so that the pupils are able to express themselves in oral as well as written form on common topics, to establish social and personal relationships and to learn to understand the culture and customs of other people. As stated in the FEP for Secondary General Education (2007: 5), an active knowledge of foreign languages is necessary both from a global standpoint, because it facilitates international communication, and for the personal needs of the pupil, because it increases the pupil's chances in the international labour market.

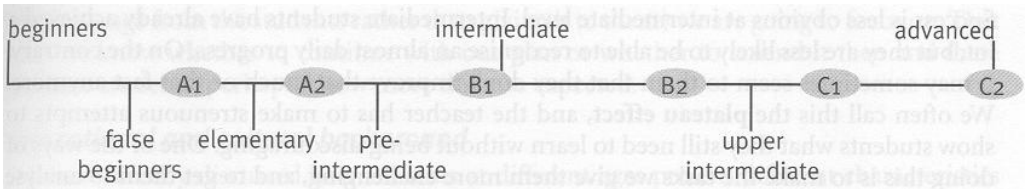
2.3.3.2 CEFR

Despite the lack of government regulation, many commercial language schools, especially those affiliated with the above-mentioned professional associations, elaborate their language syllabi, standards and assessment schemes in accordance with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (commonly abbreviated as CEFR), which also served the basis for the definition of the language requirements in FEPs, described above. The CEFR is a comprehensive guideline developed by the *Council of Europe* between 1989 and 1996 with the intention to promote international co-operation among professionals working in the field of modern languages and to facilitate comparison and mutual recognition of qualifications gained in different educational systems in Europe.

The Framework defines language use and learning in terms of learner's competences and communicative activities. Learner's competences include general and communicative language competences, the latter comprising linguistic (associated with language as system), sociolinguistic (socially appropriate language use) and pragmatic components (functional use of linguistic resources in interactional exchanges). Language activities, on the other hand, refer to what the learner can do with the resources in real life, for instance if s/he can take notes in university lectures or give a business presentation. These real-world uses involve reception (reading and listening), production (speaking and writing), mediation (interpreting and translating) and interaction, which has a central role in communication.

Most importantly, the CEFR describes what language knowledge and skills FL learners have to develop for effective communication and defines the learners' language competences by means of six reference levels specifying what they 'can do' at each of the levels. The traditional division into elementary, intermediate and advanced roughly corresponds to three broad CEFR levels: A (*Basic User*), B (*Independent User*), and C (*Professional User*). These are subdivided into two levels, resulting in the following scale: A1 (*Breakthrough*), A2 (*Waystage*), B1 (*Threshold*), B2 (*Vantage*), C1 (*Effective Operational Proficiency*) and C2 (*Mastery*). The CEFR terminology and the traditional description of learners' levels of proficiency are contrasted in Figure 1, taken from Harmer (2007a: 17).

Figure 1: Comparison of CEFR and Traditional Language Levels



3 PEDAGOGICAL RESEARCH

3.1 Methodology and Factors of the Research

For the practical part of the diploma thesis, the pedagogical research, three private language schools providing post-secondary courses in English were chosen. The three schools participating in the research were: *Glossa – škola jazyků*, s.r.o. (hereinafter only *Glossa*), located in Prague 1, *Tutor* s.r.o (hereinafter only *Tutor*), namely its branch in Prague 1, and *Idea*, s.r.o. (hereinafter only *Idea*), a small language school located in the South Moravian town of Hodonín. While the former two are large and well-established, the latter is relatively new – it was founded in 2006 - and, due to its location in a small regional town, has far fewer clients. Although its main focus is in-company teaching, since 2009, *Idea* has also been offering one-year post-secondary courses in English and German.

Glossa was founded in Prague in 1992 and since then it has expanded from a small training centre with a handful of teachers into a mid-sized language school with over a hundred and twenty permanent teachers and instructors and has built up a stable position among the top ten institutions specialized in language teaching in the Czech Republic. *Glossa* was one of the founder members of ACERT and in 2011 it joined AJŠA and is thus an affiliate to both major associations of language schools in the Czech Republic. It offers post-secondary courses in English only.

Tutor was founded in 2000 as an institution specializing in preparation for university entrance exams and only later it expanded to include also language teaching. In February 2010 *Tutor* merged with Caledonian School (offering public and in-company language courses) and Top Vision (specialized in the development of managerial skills and coaching) into EDUA Group, making it the largest private educational group in the Czech Republic. With educational centres in 10 cities and towns around the country, including Prague, Brno and Ostrava, 10,000 clients per year and 700 courses offered, EDUA Group's position on the market is one of the most stable. *Tutor* is a

member of the *Association of Language Schools and Agencies* (AJŠA). *Tutor* offers post-secondary courses in English, German, French and Spanish.

The pedagogical research consisted of a thorough comparison of post-secondary programmes offered by the three language schools: their organisation, course books and teaching methods deployed, types of placement, progress and final tests as well as international exams taken at the end of the course and a detailed analysis of a pair of questionnaires filled in by 94 and 91 post-secondary students (40 from *Glossa*, 40 from *Tutor* and 14/ 11 from *Idea*) at the beginning and at the end of school year 2011/12.

The first questionnaire, presented to the 94 respondents on the very first school day, was in fact a needs analysis designed to reveal the students' educational background, their reasons for choosing a post-secondary course as well as their idea of which teaching materials and methods should be used and which language forms and skills they would like to improve most. The other questionnaire, completed in April 2012, enquired about the progress the students had made and whether they had been satisfied with the methods and teaching materials used. Reflecting the changed legal conditions for post-secondary language study, the second questionnaire also aimed to discover whether the students would have attended the course even without secondary school student status and the related financial benefits.

Based on the output of the survey, the most popular textbook was evaluated using the criteria listed in Chapter 2.2.5.2 and a number of suitable supplementary teaching materials were selected. Also, drawing upon the theoretical background and taking into account the students' preferences, optimal teaching methods and techniques were recommended. In the very last stage of the research, the arguments in favour of and against the recent change in legislation were contrasted and the overall educational and practical implications were summarized.

3.2 Organization of Post-secondary Courses

Although there is a certain legal framework regulating post-secondary language study, minutely described in Chapter 2.3.2, the management of post-secondary courses is left largely within the authority of individual language schools. Apart from the fact that it is a day form of education lasting one school year with four 45-minute lessons a day, which is twenty 45-minute lessons a week, and that all students who meet the criterion of 75% attendance receive a standard Certificate SEVT 49 730 1 *Osvědčení o absolvování jednoletého jazykového kursu* (the Certificate of Completion of a One-year Language Course), regardless of the type, level and result of the final exam they take, the very organization of the course, including the actual timetable, number of teachers and the type and frequency of examination carried out, differ greatly between the three analyzed language schools.

3.2.1 *Glossa*

3.2.1.1 Timetable and Teachers

Glossa carries out morning post-secondary courses in English, starting at 9.45 and finishing at 13.00, counting a 15-minute break. The students are placed into one of two offered levels named after the CEFR level they are expected to reach by the end of the course: B1 and B2. The syllabus of each level is divided between two teachers: a Czech teacher and a native speaker, each teaching in 180-minute teaching blocks. At the lower level, Czech teachers teach 4 days a week (i.e. 16 lessons) and concentrate on general English and exam preparation, whereas native speakers teach one day per week (4 lessons), focusing mainly on communicative skills. At the higher, B2 level, Czech teachers teach three days a week (12 lessons), with main focus on general English and preparation for reading and listening sections of the final exam, and native speakers teach two days a week (8 lessons), developing mainly communicative and writing skills.

3.2.1.2 Levels, Textbooks, Syllabi

The choice of textbooks for post-secondary courses is based on the assumption that students wish not only to improve their general English but

also to take the *City & Guilds International ESOL* (IESOL) and *Spoken ESOL* (ISESOL) exams at the end of the course. Students in B1 groups are prepared for *City & Guilds Achiever* exam, which is equivalent to CEFR level B1; B2 students are expected to take the *City & Guilds Communicator*, corresponding to level B2. As can be seen from Table 3 below, the core textbooks are: *New English File* (NEF), *Natural English* (NE) and *City & Guilds* exam preparation books: *International ESOL* and *International SESOL*. In addition, teachers are recommended to use extra material suitable for the given level, focusing on skills development, consolidation of grammar and expansion of vocabulary.

3.2.1.3 Testing and Examination

Students' level is assessed when they register at the school's reception. The written-only placement test consists of 80 multiple-choice questions, arranged in order of increasing difficulty, and is corrected by the reception staff (a sample copy of the test is located in Appendix I). As the placement test does not involve testing the applicants' speaking, reading, listening or writing skills and is not carried out by a qualified teacher, the level assessment is often unreliable and, together with the fact that *Glossa* offers only two levels – B1 and B2, results in vast linguistic differences between students in one class and sometimes even requires regrouping in the first weeks of the course. In school year 2011/12, students were placed into the two levels as follows: one B1 group with 17 students, two B2 groups with 16 students each.

Throughout the school year, there is no centrally organized testing. All testing to monitor students' progress is left within the responsibility of individual teachers, who usually employ tests from the Test Booklet accompanying the *New English File* books. The only compulsory testing comes in April, roughly in the 31st or 32nd week of the course and it is a pre-testing for the *City & Guilds* exam of the given level. Based on the results of this test, students may change the level of the actual exam (taken in June) to a level below or above the one their group is preparing for. The written, IESOL exam is included in the course fee, for the oral, ISESOL exam an extra fee is to be paid. As a result, not all students usually apply for the optional spoken exam. The teachers adjust the exam preparation accordingly. Besides the

standard certificate, the students who pass the *City& Guilds* IESOL and/ or ISESOL exam receive an official certificate from the *European Branch Office* in Budapest showing the level of English they have achieved.

Table 3: Core Textbooks Used at *Glossa*

Starting level	**Term**	**Teacher**	**Focus**	**Textbook**	**Final level**
A2	winter	Czech	General English	NEF Pre-intermediate	**B1**
		Czech	Exam preparation	ISESOL Book 2 (Achiever/ Communicator), IESOL Book 3 (Achiever)	
		Native	Communication skills	NE Pre-intermediate (Units 1-7)	
	summer	Czech	General English	NEF Intermediate	
		Czech	Exam preparation	ISESOL Book 2 (Achiever/ Communicator), IESOL Book 3(Achiever)	
		Native	Communication Skills	NE Pre-intermediate (Units 8-14)	
B1	winter	Czech	General English	NEF Intermediate	**B2**
		Czech	Exam preparation	ISESOL Book 2 (Achiever/ Communicator), IESOL Book 4 (Communicator)	
		Native	Communication skills	NE Intermediate (Units 1-7)	
		Native	Exam preparation	IESOL Book 4 (Communicator): Writing	
	summer	Czech	General English	NEF Upper-intermediate	
		Czech	Exam preparation	ISESOL Book 2 (Achiever/ Communicator), IESOL Book 4 (Communicator)	
		Native	Communication skills	NE Intermediate (Units 8-14)	
		Native	Exam preparation	IESOL Book 4 (Communicator): Writing	

3.2.2 *Tutor*

3.2.2.1 Timetable and Teachers

Tutor offers two types of post-secondary course: a morning programme, comprising twenty 45-minute lessons per week, starting daily at 9 and finishing at 12.20, with a 20-minute break, and an afternoon programme, comprising 10 lessons per week, that is, two lessons a day. Students can attend either the morning programme, or the afternoon one, or they can combine the morning programme of English and the afternoon of German, French or Spanish. For the purpose of this thesis, only the morning programme is taken into account.

The classes are shared by three teachers: a class teacher, a skills teacher and a grammar teacher, each teaching a different number of 45-minute lessons in 90-minute blocks, with teachers usually alternating during the teaching day (unlike at *Glossa*, where one teacher teaches all four 45-lesson per day). Each of the three teachers is assigned a different role and a different set of responsibilities, as follows:

Class teachers, who teach ten 45-lessons per week, are in charge of setting the course structure and mainly use the core course book. Skills teachers and grammar teachers must follow their instructions. Class teachers are also responsible for the correct filling in the Class Register Book and are required to fill in a Post-secondary Class Report about the progress of the class twice a semester (i.e. four times a year).

Skills teachers are typically native speakers. Out of the six 45-minute lessons they teach per week, they share the textbook with a class teacher for four lessons, focusing mainly on language skills development. For the remaining two hours they prepare a conversation class based on a current topic in the course book. Grammar teachers teach four lessons per week in one class and their task is to supplement the grammar topics in the core textbook by additional materials practising the given grammatical structure.

3.2.2.2 Levels, Textbooks, Syllabi

Like at *Glossa*, post-secondary courses at *Tutor* are designed to include both general English and optional preparation for an international exam. The

general English coursebook at all levels is *New Inside Out* (NIO). Moreover, groups which choose to take an exam are methodically prepared for Cambridge exams such as PET or FCE, depending on their starting level, and exam preparation books for individual courses are selected accordingly. An overview of core textbooks currently used in post-secondary courses divided by level is given in Table 4 below. Skills teachers and Grammar teachers are more or less free to choose supplementary materials for their classes as far as they comply with the requirements for individual levels.

Table 4: Core Textbooks used at *Tutor*

<table>
<tr><th>Starting level</th><th>Winter semester</th><th>Progress testing (written)</th><th>Summer semester</th><th>Final testing (written and oral)</th></tr>
<tr><td>Beginner/ False Beginner/ Elementary (A1)</td><td>NIO Elementary</td><td rowspan="4">Based on NIO official test CD</td><td>NIO Pre-intermediate, possibly combined with PET tests</td><td rowspan="4">Based on NIO official test CD or PET/ FCE/ CAE mock test</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pre-intermediate/ Pre-intermediate + (A2)</td><td>NIO Pre-intermediate</td><td>NIO Intermediate, possibly combined with PET tests</td></tr>
<tr><td>Intermediate/ Intermediate + (B1)</td><td>NIO Intermediate</td><td>FCE Expert (formerly FCE Gold Plus)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Upper-intermediate/ Upper-intermediate+ (B2)</td><td>NIO Upper-intermediate</td><td>CAE Expert</td></tr>
</table>

3.2.2.3 Testing and Examination

Unlike at *Glossa* and *Idea*, placement tests at *Tutor* are left till the beginning of the school year. On the very first school day, all applicants are collectively tested and subsequently divided in the respective groups. The written part of the placement test takes approximately 30 minutes and is followed by a 15-minute oral test in pairs or groups of three. A copy of both a sample written and spoken test can be found in Appendix I.

After the initial placement testing on 1 September 2011, the 90 students were divided into the following levels and classes (arranged according to their

starting level, in ascending order): Beginners (A0): 14 students; False Beginners (A1): 13 students; Pre-intermediate (A2): 10 students; Pre-intermediate+ (A2+) 12 students; Intermediate (B1): 14 students; Intermediate+ (B1+): 13 students; and Upper-intermediate (B2): 14 students.

Students go through progress and final testing twice a year (January and May). Progress tests are based on *New Inside Out* official tests and are written only, final tests have both a written and an oral part. Since in the second semester students can choose between general English and exam preparation, final tests are either based on the official *New Inside Out* tests again or compiled from the *Cambridge Exams Past Papers*, released by the *British Council* every year. In this way the students actually take a shortened mock exam. All written tests are created so that they include the following parts: listening, grammar and vocabulary (or use of English with mock tests) and reading. Oral exams are based on the Cambridge exam format, regardless of the type of course the students choose. All written and oral tests are prepared in detail by the Academic Management; the testing itself as well as the correction of the test is carried out by the class teachers.

3.2.3 *Idea*

3.2.3.1 Timetable and Teachers

The classes at *Idea* take place only in the morning, from 8.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m., including a 30-mintue break. Like at *Glossa*, the teaching week consists of 5 teaching days, each day comprising a block of four 45-minute lessons taught by one teacher.

Although the syllabus is designed to be shared by Czech and English-speaking teachers, it is not always possible to hire a native speaker in this region, so this year's post-secondary class is taught by Czech teachers only. Like at *Tutor*, the course is divided between three teachers: a class teacher, a skills teacher and a grammar teacher. The class teacher teaches three days a week, four 45-lessons a day (i.e. 12 lessons per week), using mainly the core textbooks listed below. The grammar teacher, who is allotted one 180-minute block a week, primarily revises and reinforces grammatical structures learnt in the general English classes. The skills teacher, ideally a native speaker, also

teaches one 4-lesson block a week and concentrates on language functions, conversation topics and communication skills. In years when a native speaker is available, s/he covers also topics associated with life in English-speaking countries, drills pronunciation, idioms and colloquial English.

3.2.3.2 Levels, Textbooks, Syllabi

Idea advertises two levels of English post-secondary courses: Pre-Intermediate (with the aim to achieve level B1 by the end of the course) and Intermediate (with final level B2). However, due to a relatively low demand for language courses in the region in the last few years, only one – B2 level – group is being taught at the moment.

As can be seen from the table below, *Idea* systematically prepares its students for Cambridge PET or FCE exams, which is reflected also in the choice of core course books. Consequently, the core textbooks used by the class teacher are: *New English File* (NEF) of the respective level for general English and *Complete PET* or *Complete FCE* for exam preparation. An intensive preparation for Cambridge exams usually starts in February and finishes in May, just before the exam is due. Like at *Glossa* and *Tutor*, there is no fixed syllabus obligating the grammar and skills teachers to use certain textbooks in their classes. On the contrary, they are given free hand in selecting their materials from the school's library.

Table 5: Core Textbooks Used at *Idea*

Starting level	Semester	Focus	Textbook	Final level
A2	Winter	General English	NEF Pre-intermediate	**B1**
		Exam preparation	Complete PET	
	Summer	General English	NEF Intermediate	
		Exam preparation	Complete PET	
B1	Winter	General English	NEF Intermediate	**B2**
		Exam preparation	Complete First Certificate	
	Summer	General English	NEF Upper-intermediate	
		Exam preparation	Complete First Certificate	

3.2.3.3 Testing and Examination

All applicants take a written placement test (a sample copy is attached in Appendix I), consisting of grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing sections, which is followed by a short interview led by a qualified teacher capable of assessing the student's language skills accurately. For school year 2011/12, 16 applicants passed the entry test and were all placed in the Intermediate (i.e. B2) group.

There are no official progress tests designed by the Academic Management, but class teachers are strongly recommended to make regular use of the *New English File* tests to monitor the students' progress during the year. Past FCE and PET tests from the *British Council* serve as mock testing before taking the real exam. As the exam prices are not included in the course fee, on average only about five students actually take the exam. Those who successfully pass the exam receive, on the top of the standard certificate, an official certificate issued by the *University of Cambridge International Examinations Department*.

3.2.4 Comparison and Conclusions

There are many similarities and a few differences between the post-secondary courses offered by the three analyzed language schools.

3.2.4.1 Timetable and Teachers

As far as the timetable is concerned, there is very little variation between the three schools, as the length and number of lessons, as well as the overall organization of the school year, are specified by law. The key difference is the length of teaching units taught by one teacher: while at *Glossa* and *Idea* teachers teach in 180-minute blocks, *Tutor* teachers alternate after 90 minutes. Also the number of lessons each teacher teaches differs, as each school assigns a different number of teachers per course: at *Tutor* and *Idea* the classes are divided between three teachers: a class, a grammar and a skills teacher, *Glossa* post-secondary groups are taught by two teachers only: a Czech teacher, responsible for general English and exam preparation, and a native speaker, focusing on the development of communication skills.

3.2.4.2 Levels, Textbooks, Syllabi

There are significant differences in the number of course levels offered by individual language schools, which follows from their location, size (of premises as well as teaching staff) and position in the market. Understandably, the biggest of the three, *Tutor*, traditionally opens the widest range of groups and levels (up to seven different levels), followed by *Glossa*, whose standard are two B2 and one or two B1 groups. *Idea*, a small regional school, advertises two levels (B1 and B2), but only one B2 group is opened at the moment.

The sophistication of the syllabus corresponds with the number of levels as well as the amount of experience with post-secondary programmes each of the schools has. The choice of exam materials is, logically, influenced by the type of international exam aimed at: *Tutor* and *Idea* prepare students for various levels of Cambridge exams and thus use materials like *FCE Expert*, *CAE Gold*, *Complete First Certificate* and *Complete PET*; *Glossa*, an accredited centre for *City & Guilds* international exams, makes use of *City & Guilds* approved course books. As far as General English is concerned, the choice of core textbooks is solely within the authority of each school's Academic Management. *Glossa* and *Idea* seem to favour OUP's *New English File* and *Natural English* series (the latter at *Glossa* only); whereas *Tutor* gives priority to Macmillan's *Inside Out* and *Reward*. In the choice of supplementary teaching resources (used especially in grammar- and skills-oriented classes), teachers are mostly given a free hand.

3.2.4.3 Testing and Examination

Three types of testing were compared in the research: placement, progress and mock tests. A logical assumption that the bigger the language school, the more organized and elaborated the testing is has proved only party true. The most thorough testing is, indeed, carried out at *Tutor*: their placement tests consist of both a written and a spoken part and are conducted by qualified teachers, therefore are highly reliable. Similarly, *Idea* tests both the applicants' language skills (writing, speaking and reading) and their grasp of grammar and vocabulary. However, *Glossa* written multiple-choice placement test based on the *City & Guilds* purely communicative format is not informative enough.

Also the system of progress monitoring is by far the most sophisticated at *Tutor*: while at *Glossa* and *Idea* all testing during the school year is left within the responsibility of individual teachers, *Tutor* Academic Management designs regular all-school progress and final tests. As to exam preparation and pre-testing, all three schools give their students a chance to take a mock test well ahead of the actual examination, in case they decide to increase or decrease the level of the exam they eventually take. Pre-testing materials are provided by the respective examining institution, that is, by the *British Council* at *Tutor* and *Idea* and *City & Guilds* at *Glossa*.

As far as final testing and certificates are concerned, there are basically two kinds of certificates awarded: an official SEVT 49 730 1 certificate given to all students meeting the 75% attendance criterion (the attendance is recorded in the Class Register Book on daily basis), regardless of the level and result of the exam they take. In addition, the students who pass a *City& Guilds* IESOL and/ or ISESOL exam receive a certificate from the *City& Guilds European Branch Office* and the students who take a Cambridge exam, such as PET, FCE or CAE obtain an official document issued by the *University of Cambridge*.

3.3 Needs Analysis

The needs analysis was the first of two questionnaires filled in by students attending post-secondary courses at the three analysed language schools in school year 2011/12. As the questionnaire was presented to the students at the very beginning of their studies, it was conducted in Czech to ensure that even respondents with minimum or no knowledge of English can answer all the questions with ease. A sample questionnaire form is attached at the end of the thesis. The needs analysis questionnaire was filled in by 94 respondents in total: 14 respondents from *Idea*, all from Intermediate (i.e. B2) group; 40 respondents from *Glossa*, out of which 16 attend the B1 group and 24 attend the two B2 groups (12 students from each group); and out of 90 post-secondary students enrolled on at *Tutor*, the questionnaire was filled in by 40, whose level was not yet known at the time of the analysis, as *Tutor* places its students into groups only after the beginning of the school year.

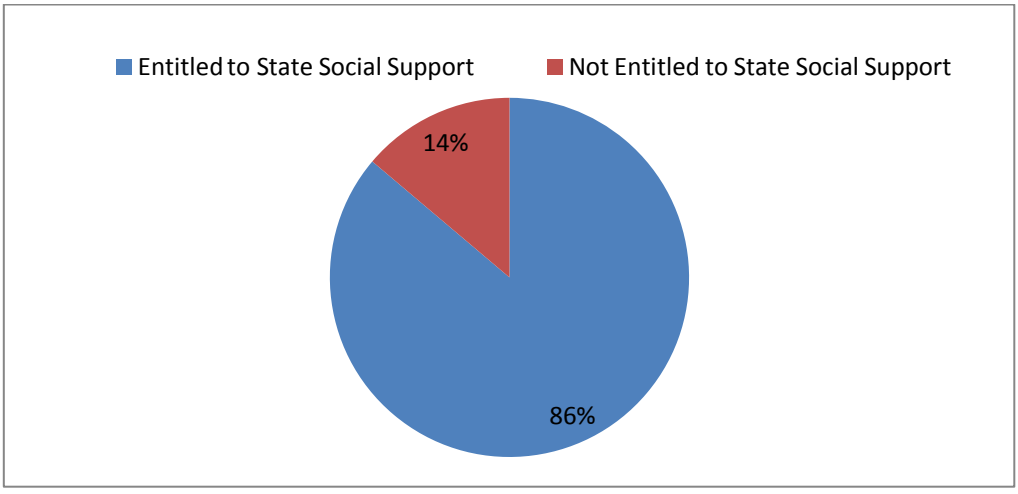
3.3.1 Length of Previous English Studies

The first question, 'How long have you been learning English?' was principally a lead-in to the subject; still it yielded fairly interesting results. It emerged that the respondents' history of learning English is extremely varied, ranging from zero experience with English to up to 16 or 21 years of previous studies. However, most typically, the respondents had been studying English for 10 years (25% at *Glossa* and *Tutor*, 78% at *Idea*), which implies that they started learning English in the third year of primary school and enrolled on a post-secondary course immediately after finishing a 4-year secondary school.

3.3.2 Timing of Study in Relation to Student Status

Although virtually anybody can attend a one-year language course, those wishing to be exempt from paying social security insurance contributions must maintain the status of secondary-school student. As this is only possible if they commence the course in the same calendar year in which they pass their first *Maturita* exam, Question 2 sought to discover whether the respondents entered the post-secondary course immediately after passing their *Maturita* or not. As illustrated by Graph 1, only a tiny fraction of the respondents did not enrol on the course straight after *Maturita*, perhaps because they had completed their tertiary education or had started working, whereas the vast majority (86%) of post-secondary students came to the analysed language schools directly from secondary schools and are thus entitled to receive the state social support. In particular, it was 82.5% of students at *Glossa*, 87.5% at *Tutor* and 93% at *Idea*.

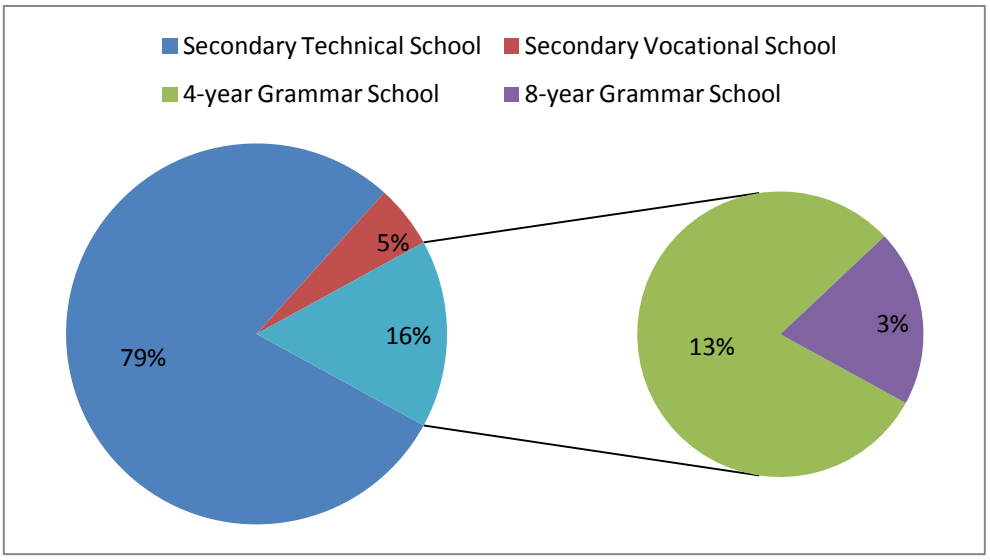
Graph 1: Proportion of Students Entitled to State Social Support



3.3.3 Respondents' Educational Background

Another question revealing useful information about the respondents' educational background was Question 3, enquiring about the type of secondary school they attended. As can be seen from Graph 2, an overwhelming majority of post-secondary students (79% in total) came from a kind of secondary technical school (*střední odborná škola*) such as secondary business school, secondary school of hotel and catering industry and secondary schools specializing in art and advertising. In particular, 75% of respondents at *Glossa*, 82.5% at *Tutor* and 78% at *Idea* attended a secondary technical school.

Graph 2: Type of Secondary School Attended



Only 15 out of the 94 surveyed students (16%) completed their secondary studies at a grammar school (*gymnázium*): 12 attended a 4-year grammar school and three attended an 8-year grammar school. It seems to imply that as grammar schools prepare their pupils primarily for the study at a higher education institution, most grammar school graduates have no difficulties passing university entrance exams and go on to study at a university directly, without taking a gap year studying languages.

At another extreme, the strikingly low number (5%) of respondents with secondary vocational education reflects the fact that secondary vocational schools (*střední odborné učiliště*) are meant to prepare pupils for an occupation rather than further studies.

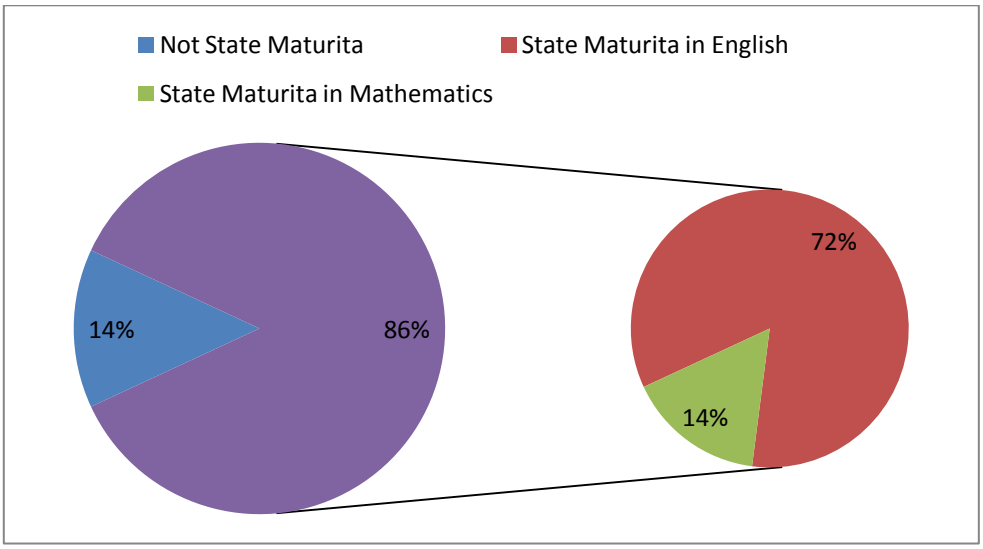
3.3.4 Level of State *Maturita* Exam Taken

According to the MEYS, the new format of *Maturita* examination shall guarantee that all secondary school leavers have acquired FL education of equally high quality, which, in turn, shall facilitate an accurate assessment of applicants' initial level of English at entrance exams at both universities and language schools. However, for the time being, state *Maturita* in FL is not compulsory and students may opt for Mathematics instead. Therefore, respondents were asked whether they had taken *Maturita* in English and if so, to indicate the level: the lower (corresponding to B1) or the higher (B2).

At *Glossa*, where it was possible to monitor the differences between individual course levels, it emerged that almost half of B1 students did not take the new *Maturita* exam in English, which suggests that, apart from three respondents who completed their secondary education before 2011, most B1 applicants were not confident enough to take the exam in English and chose Mathematics instead. The remaining nine respondents took the basic level, and, as expected, none of the B1 students attempted the B2 exam. However, even in the two B2 groups, 50% of students took the lower version of *Maturita*, one respondent attempted to pass both levels but failed the B2 exam and four students passed the higher, B2 level. Moreover, three B2 students gave priority to Mathematics as the second part of the centrally planned *Maturita* exam.

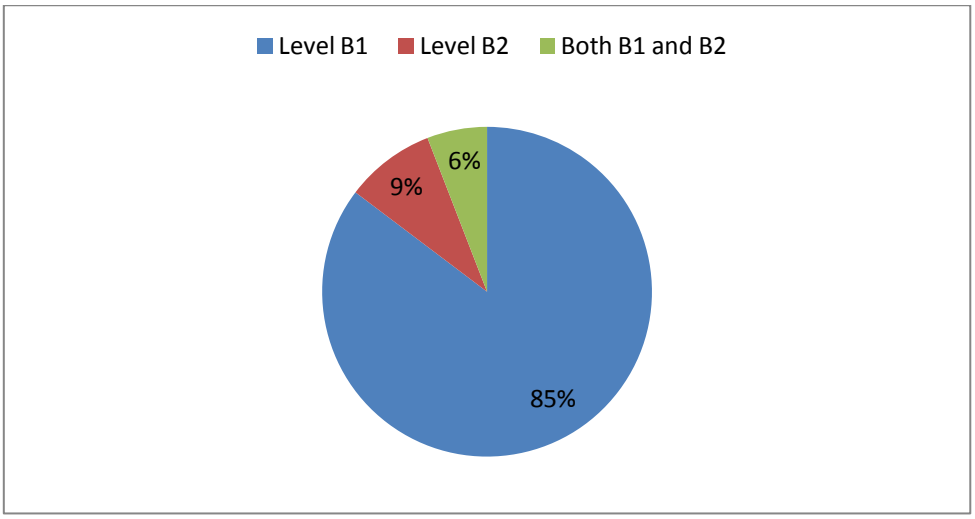
At *Tutor*, where it was not possible to assort the respondents' answers by course levels, 72.5% of respondents took the B1, 5% the B2 and 7.5% both levels. Five respondents finished their secondary school before the launch of state *Maturita* examination and one opted for Mathematics, which means that, in total, 15% of *Tutor* respondents did not take the new *Maturita* in English. The distribution of answers of *Idea* students was fairly straightforward – 57% passed the lower level and the remaining six did not take *Maturita* in English, including one who passed the school-leaving exam before 2011. None of *Idea* students took the B2 *Maturita* exam.

Graph 3: Type of *Maturita* Exam Taken



Altogether, 81 out of the 94 respondents (i.e. 86%) passed the state *Maturita* in May 2011, but only 68 of them (84%) sat the exam in English. In Graph 3, where the figures are shown as a ratio of all 94 respondents, this corresponds to 72%. The remaining 13 students, despite having the opportunity to obtain the *Maturita* certificate in English, chose Mathematics instead.

Graph 4: Level of State *Maturita* in English Taken



As can be seen from Graph 4 above, out of the sixty-eight 2011 graduates, an overwhelming majority (85%) took the basic level of *Maturita*. Only six students successfully passed the higher, B2 level and four passed both B1 and B2 versions.

It seems plausible that secondary school students who successfully pass the higher level of *Maturita* exam have reached a level of English satisfactory enough to pass university entrance exam in English or find a decent job in the Czech Republic or abroad and do not feel the need to improve their language skills at a language school. The fact that the majority of clients in post-secondary courses passed the lower level of *Maturita* or did not take *Maturita* in English at all seems to explain the high demand for target B1 and B2 level courses at all three language schools. In other words, whereas B2 version of state *Maturita* seems to guarantee adequate language skills (as assumed by the MEYS), the graduates with B1 *Maturita* certificate still feel unable to communicate in English effectively.

3.3.5 Respondents' Actual Level of English

The results of the individual placement tests more or less correspond to the students' own estimation of their real level of English. In *Glossa* B1 group almost half of the students assessed their skills to level A1 and the other half to A2. Only two students felt they had already reached the B1 level. On the contrary, in the two B2 groups, only one student assessed the skills to A1, four students to A2 and an overwhelming majority (58%) rated their skills as B1. Surprisingly, five B2 students thought they had already reached the B2 level.

Over half of *Idea* post-secondary students (57%), all of which study towards B2, assessed their own skills adequately – to level B1. The rest thought they had reached the target B2 level already. At *Tutor*, where it was not possible to analyze the questionnaires by levels, 47.5% of respondents thought their actual level was B1, the second most numerous group (25%) assessed their skills as A2, the third group (20%) as A1 and only 7.5% thought their actual level was as high as B2, although, theoretically, there were 14 students whose starting level was assessed as B2 based on the placement test. C1 level was not marked by a single respondent.

3.3.6 Desired Target Levels

In Question 6 respondents were asked to indicate the level they would like to have reached by the end of the course. The desired levels differed

greatly: the most numerous group at *Glossa* (45%) was formed by students with the ambition to reach as high as C1 and, surprisingly, included also students from the B1 group. Unfortunately, *Glossa* does not offer this option – the highest officially achievable level is B2, which was seen as a satisfactory target by 37.5% of the respondents. Only one respondent would have been happy with at least A2; the respondent attended, obviously, the B1 group.

Exactly half of *Idea* students aspired to achieve the intended B2 level, 43% desired to reach C1 and only 7% would have been satisfied with B1 as their final level. At *Tutor*, where it was not possible to determine the students' initial level, the prevailing ambition was to reach the intermediate, B2 level (45%), being closely followed by C1 with 40%. Merely 12.5% and 2.5% of respondents at *Tutor* had B1 and A2, respectively, as their target.

It can be concluded that students enrol on post-secondary courses with the aim to improve their language skills by one or two levels and to learn to communicate fluently, since the official CEFR definition of the two most desired target levels (with 43% each) states that a B2 learner 'can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible' and a C1 learner 'can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expression' and 'can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes' (CEFR: 24).

3.3.7 Reasons for Attending Post-secondary Courses

Truly informative was Question 7, seeking to reveal the reasons why students decide to learn English in a one-year post-secondary course. Respondents had a choice of six presumably most common motives, namely: to learn to use the language actively, to pass an ESOL exam, to maintain the status of student and thus obtain social support from the state, to prepare for university entrance exams in English, to study or work abroad and to find a job in the Czech Republic in which English is required. If respondents ticked more than one motive, they were instructed to order the selected options according to importance. They were also encouraged to list any other reasons which motivated them to enrol on the course.

3.3.7.1 *Glossa*

As Table 6 demonstrates, the reason ticked most often by respondents at *Glossa* (36 times, i.e. 90%) was the desire to learn to use the language actively, that is, to be able to communicate in English. What is more, this option ranked really high as 18 students marked it as the key reason for attending the course.

Table 6: Reasons for Attending Post-secondary Courses at *Glossa*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Not ordered	**Total**		
								Σ	**%**	**Ranking**
Use English actively	18	5	3	1	-	-	9	**36**	**90**	**1**
Take an exam	-	8	3	4	-	-	3	**21**	**52.5**	**2**
Maintain student status	2	3	3	1	2	2	3	**16**	**40**	**4**
Prepare for university	2	3	3	3	-	-	3	**14**	**35**	**5**
Work/ study abroad	2	3	5	1	3	2	4	**20**	**50**	**3**
Find a job in the CR	2	3	4	3	2	1	6	**21**	**52.5**	**2**
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	**1**	**2.5**	**6**

The second place is shared by the ambition to pass an ESOL exam and the desire to find a job in which a high level of English is required. Each of these options was ticked by 21 respondents. However, these were not students' number one choices: the ambition to take an exam was most often assigned number 2 for importance and a vision of getting a good job in the Czech Republic was either not awarded any number for importance or ranked as the third most important reason. The respondents who marked 'international exam' among their motives were instructed to choose the type and level of the exam they would like to take. However, no unequivocal conclusions can be drawn as none of the exams was chosen significantly more often than the others. What is of interest, though, is the fact that three students wished to take CAE, equivalent to C1, a level which *Glossa* is not preparing for at all.

Exactly half of *Glossa* respondents marked the intention to work and/ or study abroad as a viable, but not the most important, option. 40% of *Glossa* respondents enrolled on the course in order to maintain the student status and

the related benefits. Neither this reason, however, scored particularly high as to importance. Merely 35% of *Glossa* respondents expected that the course would prepare them for university entrance exams in English. Under 'other motivation' one respondent stated that s/he had applied for the course because s/he liked the language.

3.3.7.2 *Tutor*

As can be seen from the table below, the analysis of Question 7 in the questionnaires filled out at *Tutor* yielded results remarkably similar to those from *Glossa*. In particular, the most frequent reason for attending the course at *Tutor* was to learn to use English actively, chosen by full 80 % of the 40 respondents, 26 of which (81 %) marked this option as their highest priority.

Table 7: Reasons for Attending a Post-secondary Course at *Tutor*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Total**		
							Σ	**%**	**Ranking**
Use English actively	26	5	1	-	-	-	**32**	**80**	**1**
Take an exam	6	10	5	2	2	-	**25**	**62.5**	**2**
Maintain student status	1	3	6	5	1	-	**16**	**40**	**5**
Prepare for university	4	6	4	1	2	1	**18**	**45**	**4**
Work/ study abroad	2	3	2	5	1	-	**13**	**32.5**	**6**
Find a job in the CR	2	3	8	4	2	1	**20**	**50**	**3**

Like at *Glossa*, the second most frequently chosen motive (marked 25 times) was the aim to pass an internationally acknowledged exam, which mostly scored number two in importance. The fact that *Tutor* offers a variety of course levels and a corresponding variety of exams is reflected in the heterogeneity of the exams chosen: the most popular seems to be the Cambridge FCE with 8 ticks; the second place is shared by CAE and TOEFL with three ticks each. Two respondents would be interested in taking the *City & Guilds* C1 ESOL; this exam, however, is not offered by *Tutor* at all. PET, ESOL A2 and ESOL B2 exams were each chosen once.

The ambition to find a job in the Czech Republic in which English is essential appealed to exactly half of *Tutor* respondents and thus took the third place according to both quantity and importance. The possibility to prepare for university entrance examination in English was chosen by 18 respondents (45%), which confirms the assumption that many students enrol on a post-secondary course to bridge the gap between finishing their secondary school and being admitted to a university.

Similarly to *Glossa*, maintaining the student status in order to receive social benefits from the government scored relatively low, being marked 16 times, i.e. by 40% of *Tutor* respondents. Finally, the possibility to find a job abroad and/ or to study in an English-speaking country was chosen by 13 respondents, which corresponds to 32.5%.

3.3.7.3 *Idea*

The results of the needs analysis carried out at *Idea*, the only out-of-Prague language school represented here, correspond to those from *Glossa* and *Tutor* only partly, namely in that motive number one for a vast majority of students (93%) was the ambition to learn to use the language actively.

However, from the second place onward the data from *Idea* and from the two Prague language schools start to differ. For instance, for *Idea* respondents the second most important reason for attending a post-secondary course was maintaining the student status (marked by 64%). Furthermore, as many as 57% of *Idea* students decided to learn English to increase their chances in the local job market. Prioritising this reason is not surprising considering the current unemployment rate in the region of South Moravia (10-11%) and especially in the district of Hodonín where it fluctuates between 15 and 17 % as opposed to Prague with the long-term average around 3 or 4 %.

The fourth position is jointly occupied by two equally important motives: the ambition to take an ESOL exam and the need to prepare for university entrance exams – each being chosen 6 times (43%). The least important factor for *Idea* students seems to be the possibility to work or study abroad (36%). No other reasons in addition to the prewritten ones were chosen.

Table 8: Reasons for Attending a Post-secondary Course at *Idea*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Not ordered	**Total**		
								Σ	**%**	**Ranking**
Use English actively	6	3	-	2	-	-	3	**13**	**93**	**1**
Take an exam	1	1	2	1	1	-	-	**6**	**43**	**4**
Maintain student status	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	**9**	**64**	**2**
Prepare for university	1	2	-	2	1	-	-	**6**	**43**	**4**
Work/ study abroad	-	1	2	-	-	-	1	**5**	**36**	**5**
Find a job in the CR	1	1	2	2	-	-	1	**8**	**57**	**3**

3.3.7.4 Comparison and Conclusions

Table 9 and Graph 5 present an overview of similarities and differences between the three schools. It can be concluded that unquestionably the most important reason for students to attend a post-secondary language course is their wish to learn to use the language actively, that is, to be able to communicate more or less fluently with native as well as non-native English speakers. This option was marked most frequently at all three schools, altogether by 86% of all 94 respondents, and was mostly given number one for importance (by 50 respondents). Apart from this reason, however, the ranking differs greatly, especially between the two Prague schools and *Idea*.

Both Prague schools show the desire to pass an ESOL exam as the second most important reason for attending the course. Moreover, at *Glossa*, exactly the same number of respondents (21) marked the ambition to find a job in which English is essential, so the second position is split between these two factors. On the contrary, the second most important motive at *Idea* was to maintain the status of student and thus receive the state social support – an aspect which scored relatively low at Prague language schools (fourth at *Glossa* and fifth at *Tutor*). In total, the second most important reason for studying English a post-secondary course is the ambition to take an international exam, being marked by 55% of all 94 respondents.

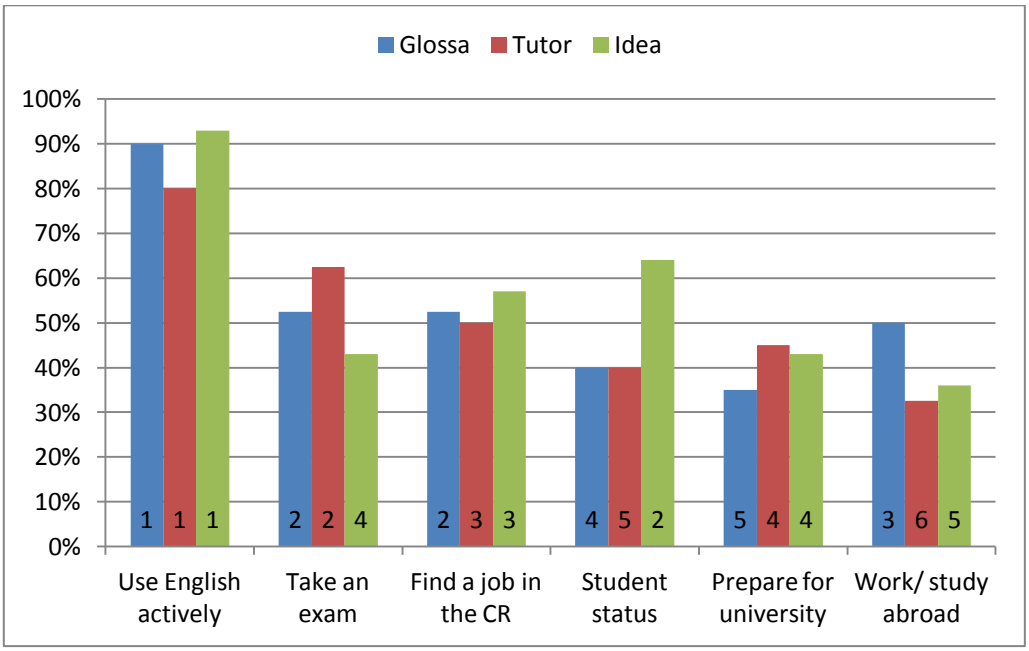
Table 9: Overall Reasons for Attending a Post-secondary Course

	Glossa		*Tutor*		*Idea*		**Total**	
	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	**%**	**Ranking**
Use English actively	90	1	80	1	93	1	**86**	**1**
Take an exam	52.5	2	62.5	2	43	4	**55**	**2**
Maintain student status	40	4	40	5	64	2	**44**	**4**
Prepare for university	35	5	45	4	43	4	**40**	**5**
Work/ study abroad	50	3	32.5	6	36	5	**40**	**5**
Find a job in the CR	52.5	2	50	3	57	3	**52**	**3**

The third most important factor overall seems to be the possibility to increase their chances in the Czech labour market, an option selected by just over half of the 94 respondents. 44% of all respondents would like to retain the student status, which can be thus rated as the fourth most important motive altogether, although it ranked fourth only at *Glossa*, whereas at *Tutor* and *Idea* reason number four was preparation for university entrance exams, at *Idea* together with the wish to take an ESOL exam. The remaining two factors, preparation for university entrance exams in English and the intention to work and/ or study abroad, were chosen by 38 respondents each, and consequently share the last, fifth position as seemingly the least important factors. No other reasons for attending the course worth considering were given.

The output of the analysis seems to imply that whereas Prague language schools do not need to fear a dramatic drop in demand for post-secondary courses caused by the change in legislation, for *Idea*, and other small regional language schools likewise, the loss of student benefits will probably have far-reaching implications since maintaining the student status was one of the most decisive reasons for attending the course.

Graph 5: Overall Reasons for Attending a Post-secondary Course[10]



3.3.8 Previous Attempts at University Studies

In Questions 8 and 9 respondents were enquired whether they had applied for admission to a university upon completion of their secondary studies and whether they were going to reapply after finishing the post-secondary course. The objective was to find out whether students attend post-secondary courses to bridge the gap between their attempts to enter a university or regardless of their university studies.

Nearly two thirds of *Glossa* respondents (60%) tried to get into a university immediately after passing their *Maturita* exam. The university most frequently applied to was *Charles University in Prague*, which is hardly surprising, considering that with its 17 faculties it is the biggest tertiary education institution in the country. The faculties represented in the research were (in order of frequency): *Faculty of Law*, *Faculty of Physical Education and Sport*, *Faculty of Arts*, *Faculty of Humanities*, *Faculty of Social Sciences* and *Faculty of Education*. The second most common university was *Czech Technical University in Prague*, followed by the *University of Economics, Prague* and *Czech University of Life Sciences Prague*. 40% of *Glossa* students,

[10] The reasons are ordered from left to right in order of overall importance. Their ranking at individual schools is indicated by the number inside the respective column.

two of which had already completed their tertiary education, did not apply to any university in the previous academic year.

The distribution of answers at *Tutor* was very similar: 65% of respondents applied for admission to a university and 35% did not. The most popular universities with *Tutor* students were: *Charles University in Prague* (namely *Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences* and *Faculty of Humanities*), *Czech University of Life Sciences Prague*, *University of Economics, Prague, University of West Bohemia* in Plzeň and *University of Pardubice*, respectively. A few other regional and private universities as well as various tertiary technical schools (*vyšší odborná škola*) appeared in the questionnaires, each applied to by one respondent only.

Also at *Idea*, most students (71%) applied to a university before signing up for the post-secondary course, mainly in the region of Moravia: *Masaryk University* in Brno, *Brno University of Technology*, *Mendel University in Brno* and *Palacký University Olomouc*, respectively. One respondent took entrance exam at *Charles University in Prague* and four respondents (29%) did not attempt to enter any university.

3.3.9 Intentions of Future University Studies

Analogous results were obtained from Question 9, 'Are you going to apply for admission to a university after finishing this course?'. An overwhelming majority of *Glossa* students (77.5%) were going to apply to a tertiary education institution, in many cases the same institution as the year before. Consequently, the list of universities corresponds to that from Question 8, the most popular being *Charles University in Prague*, especially *Faculties of Art, Physical Education and Sport, Social Sciences* and *Education*, followed by *Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague*, the *University of Economics, Prague* and *Czech Technical University in Prague*. Other, mostly private universities, such as the *Institute of Hospitality Management in Prague* or the *University of Business in Prague*, were each mentioned once. Nine out of the 40 surveyed *Glossa* students, two of which had already graduated from a university, were not going to apply to any university at all.

Similarly, two thirds (67.5%) of *Tutor* respondents were to apply to at least one university, 10 students (25%) did not wish to continue their education at university level and three (7.5%) had not decided yet when filling in the questionnaire. Like from *Glossa*, the data from *Tutor* demonstrate the students' tendency to reapply to the same institutions as before: the most frequent being *Charles University in Prague*, especially *Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Social Sciences* and *Faculty of Education*, followed by *Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague* and *University of Economics, Prague*, respectively, and a range of regional universities occurring only once, including *Technical University of Liberec, University of West Bohemia* in Plzeň, *University of Pardubice* and *Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem*.

Just as with the two Prague language schools, a significant majority (79%) of respondents at *Idea* intended to reapply to a university and the list of potential universities is, like in Question 8, dominated by institutions located in the region: *Masaryk University* in Brno, the *Technical University of Ostrava, Brno University of Technology, Mendel University in Brno* and *Palacký University Olomouc*, the only exception being one application to *Charles University in Prague*.

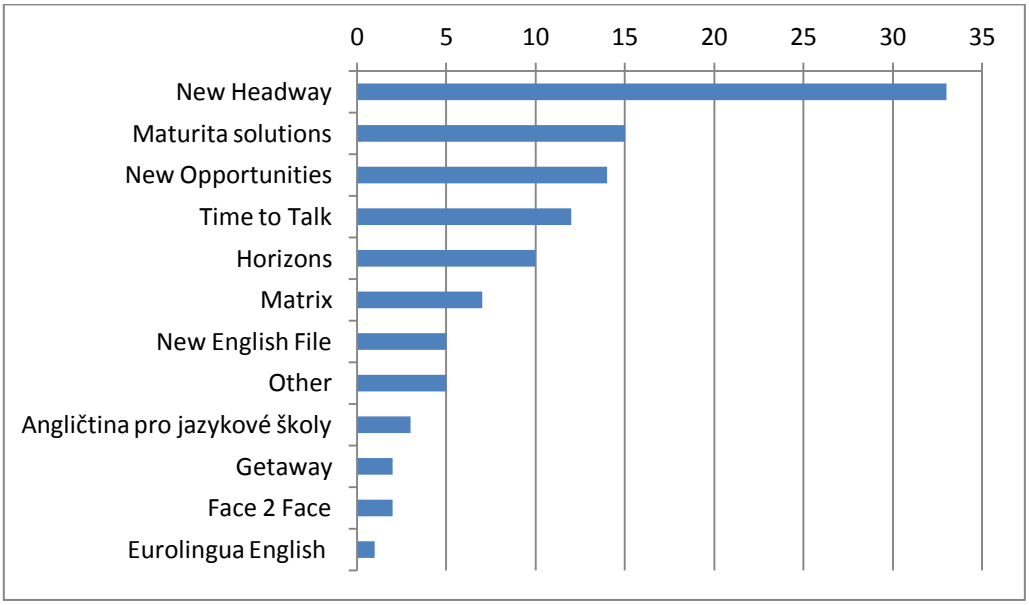
Based on the conspicuous similarity between the patterns yielded by Questions 8 and 9, showing that 60 out of 94 respondents applied for a university before entering the post-secondary course and 69 will apply after finishing the course, it can be concluded that those who wish to obtain a university degree apply for admission to a university upon completion of their secondary education and keep reapplying, mostly to the same universities and institutions. On the other hand, those who did not attempt to get into a university in the previous academic year tended not to apply to any university, perhaps because they had already completed a form of tertiary education or because they do not wish to acquire higher education at all.

3.3.10 Textbooks Used at Secondary Schools

Questions 10 and 11 aimed to discover which textbooks tend to be employed at Czech secondary schools most often and which of them students prefer, which could facilitate the selection of optimal ELT materials for post-

secondary courses and, above all, help to avoid their overlap. The list of textbooks in Question 10 was based on the MEYS list of approved textbooks for secondary schools from March 2011[11], but respondents were encouraged to list any other materials they had encountered during their English studies, be it classroom or self-study materials.

Graph 6: ELT Textbooks Used at Secondary Schools



As can be seen from Graph 6 above, by far the most frequently used secondary school textbook, both in Prague and in the regions, seems to be *New Headway*, marked by 33 out of the 94 respondents, that is, 35% in total. Significantly fewer students had experience with the following textbooks, enumerated in order of frequency: *Maturita Solutions* (16%), *New Opportunities* (15%), *Time to talk* (13%) and *Horizons* (11%); ELT materials with occurrence below 10% were: *Matrix*, *New English File*, *Angličtina pro jazykové školy*, *Getaway*, *Face 2 Face* and *Eurolingua English*. Besides the textbooks suggested in the list, some other teaching materials appeared in the questionnaire, each represented by a single instance: *Project*, *LifeLike*, *New Inside Out*, *New Cutting Edge*, *Project*, *Reward*, and *English Grammar in Use*. Worth noting is also the fact that one respondent learnt English solely by means of a self-study language learning software called *LANGmaster*, an original multimedia education system developed in the Czech Republic.

[11] Schvalovací doložky učebnic, Seznam_dolozky_SS_brezen_2011.xls, http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/aktuality-2

Although only five students (three from *Glossa*, one from *Tutor* and one from *Idea*) were familiar with *New English File*, core textbook used at *Glossa* and *Idea* at all levels, there is a certain risk that the material might coincide with what students were taught from at secondary schools. On the contrary, with *New Inside Out*, the coursebook in *Tutor* post-secondary courses, being previously used by a single respondent, the risk of potential overlap is significantly lower.

3.3.11 Textbook Preferences

Question 11 was intended to reveal students' preferences regarding the textbooks to be used in their post-secondary course. As expected, the respondents' ideas of suitable ELT materials were rather vague: the majority, 59% of all 94 respondents, left the item blank; 8.5% stated that it did not matter which books were to be used, and only a few students suggested a title, mostly coinciding with their secondary school textbook, namely: *New Headway* (11%), *New English File* (6%), *Time to Talk* and *New Opportunities* (3% each), and one instance of the following: *Maturita Solutions, Matrix, Getaway, Horizons* and *Angličtina pro jazykové školy*. Two students were fond of *English Grammar in Use*, which, however, cannot be used as a single core textbook, but rather as a supplementary material for grammar lessons.

To conclude, when choosing suitable ELT material for post-secondary courses, the textbooks used most frequently at Czech secondary schools, such as *New Headway, Maturita Solutions, New Opportunities, Time to Talk* and *Horizons* should, obviously, be avoided. And as the majority of students have no concrete idea of which textbooks they would like to work with, the choice should be left completely within the competence of an experienced academic management.

3.3.12 Teaching Methods Previously Used

As, on average, the respondents had been studying English for 10 or more years before starting the post-secondary course (see 3.3.1), it can be assumed that during their English studies they had been exposed to a number of different teaching methods and approaches, although they may not have

been always fully aware of a particular method being applied, still less of its official name. Bearing this in mind, Question 12 provided the respondents with a simplified description of three popular ELT methods to choose from, namely the *Grammar Translation Method* (GTM), the *Communicative Approach* (CA), and the *Audio-Lingual Method* (ALM). Moreover, the respondents were encouraged to list any other methods they had experienced.

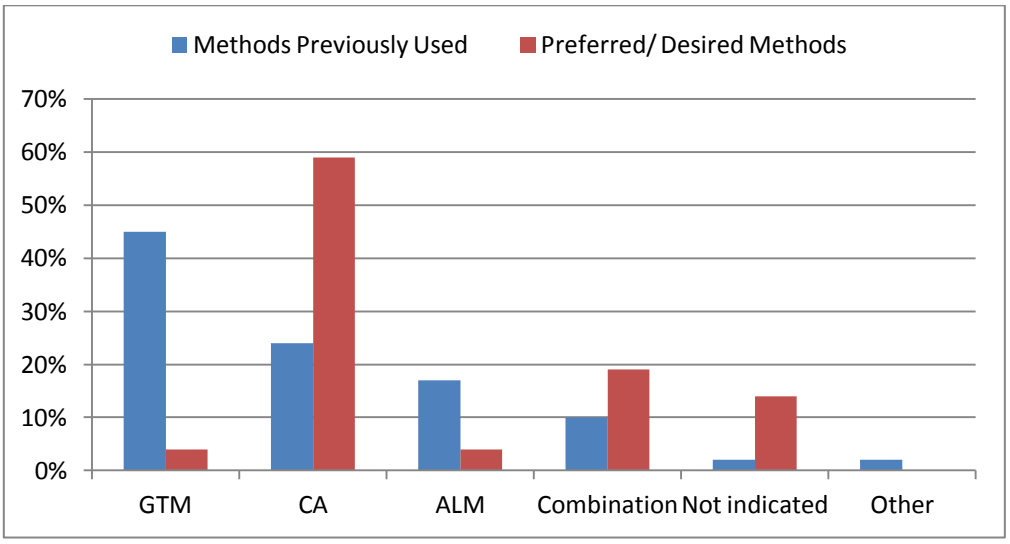
The prevailing method at all three language schools was GTM, indicated as a sole teaching method by 42, i.e. 45% of all 94 respondents. A quarter of the surveyed students were familiar with the *Communicative Approach* and 17% had experience with the ALM. An appreciable number of respondents (10%) had been taught by a combination of two methods, predominantly of GTM and *Communicative Method*, or were taught by the two methods separately at various times of their learning history. There were also two self-learners, one using the multimedia *LANGMaster* course, but no other alternative methods were mentioned. Two respondents left the box blank.

3.3.13 Preferred Teaching Methods

As a follow-up to the previous item, in Question 13 the respondents were instructed to list any ELT methods and approaches which they considered effective and wished to be used in their post-secondary course. Surprisingly, the notion of effective teaching methods was not as vague as expected: with 59%, the *Communicative Approach* highly outnumbered the other teaching methods (GTM and ALM were indicated only four times each), thus creating a wide discrepancy between the methods students favoured and those traditionally deployed at Czech primary and secondary schools. The immense popularity of the *Communicative Approach* among the respondents may have been caused by its powerful advertising as well as the common misapprehension of the term itself.

18 respondents found a combination of two (GTM and CA) or all three listed methods the most effective, thus reflecting the contemporary trends of principled eclecticism in teaching, summarized by Harmer (2007a: 51) as a combination of 'the best elements of a number of different ideas and methods'. The remaining 14% of respondents did not indicate any particular method.

Graph 7: Methods Previously Used vs. Preferred Methods



Graph 7 above illustrates the striking disproportion between the methods which appealed to post-secondary students most and methods actually applied at various schools and courses. In particular, the overall most commonly used method, GTM, was at the same time the least popular method, together with ALM, which is, however, hardly ever deployed as a single teaching method nowadays. On the other hand, the most popular method with post-secondary students seems to be the *Communicative Approach*, or rather what they perceive as *Communicative Approach*. It is highly positive that an increasing number of students realize the effectiveness of combining elements from several main methods, as can be seen from the fact that 'a combination of the above-mentioned methods' took the second place in popularity.

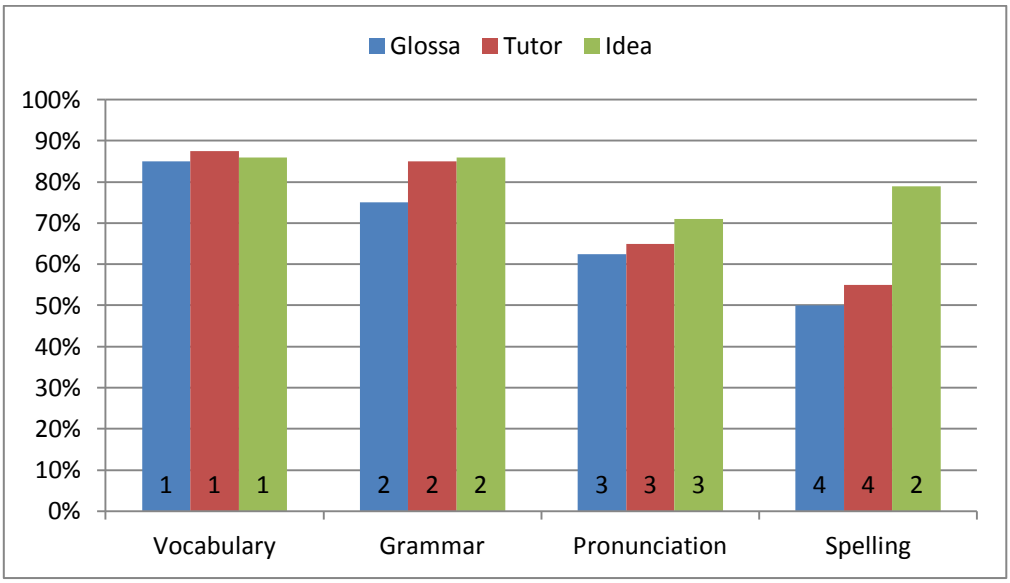
3.3.14 Language Forms Preferences

In Chapter 2.2.1, the subject matter of language teaching was divided into language forms and language skills. In order to avoid undue terminology in the needs analysis, the linguistic terms for language forms were simplified and presented as follows: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling, respectively. The respondents were instructed to choose one, two, three or all language forms which they would like to practise in the course and to order them by importance in case more than one option was selected.

Table 10: Preference of Language Forms at *Glossa*, *Tutor* and *Idea*

Language forms	Glossa		Tutor		Idea		Total		
	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	Σ	%	Ranking
Grammar	75	2	85	2	86	1	**76**	**81**	**2**
Vocabulary	85	1	87.5	1	86	1	**81**	**86**	**1**
Pronunciation	62.5	3	65	3	71	3	**61**	**65**	**3**
Spelling	50	4	55	4	79	2	**53**	**56**	**4**

Graph 8: Language Forms Preference at *Glossa*, *Tutor* and *Idea*[12]



As can be seen from the overview in Table 10 and Graph 8, the data obtained from the three analysed language schools were almost identical, with only slight variations in individual figures. Unanimously the most valued language form seems to be vocabulary, indicated by 85% of respondents at *Glossa*, 87.5% at *Tutor* and 86% at *Idea*, which makes 86% altogether. Not only was vocabulary selected the most frequently, but it was also predominantly given the highest priority: by 45 respondents, that is, 56% of the 81 respondents who marked it. Grammar, indicated 76 times, was the second most prioritized language form, appearing mostly at the second or first, but never at the last position by importance. Although pronunciation and spelling were assigned the lowest positions and were never or hardly ever given the highest priority, it must be appreciated that the proportion of students who

[12] Reasons are ordered from left to right in order of overall importance. Their ranking at individual schools is indicated by the number inside the respective column.

realized that neither pronunciation nor spelling can be neglected is relatively high, 65% and 56%, respectively.

To summarize, although post-secondary students highly prioritize vocabulary and grammar, a considerable proportion of them are aware of the fact that in order to improve their global language competence it is inevitable to practise all four language forms, including the so often neglected pronunciation and spelling.

3.3.15 Language Skills Preferences

There are two types of basic language skills: receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing). Ideally, these four skills should all be represented in an ELT lesson. However, many students may feel that practising some of the skills is more important than the others. Question 15 was thus devised to discover which of the language skills students considered essential and would like to focus most in the course. For the purpose of the needs analysis, the specific skill of translation was added, since, despite being frequently neglected, it plays an irreplaceable role in contemporary ELT. Respondents were instructed to choose one or more language skills and rank them in order of priority.

As the Table 11 and Graph 9 illustrate, the distribution of language skills preferences at the three analysed schools is analogous, especially between *Glossa* and *Tutor*, which display nearly identical tendencies. The slight differences in the data from *Idea* may be ascribed to the low number of respondents and consequent lack of differentiation.

Indisputably the most desired skill overall was speaking, selected 38 times at *Glossa* (95%), 37 times at *Tutor* (92.5%) and 14 times at *Idea* (100%). In most cases (63), it was also given number one for highest priority. Listening, with 69 points in total, ranked second, although at *Tutor*, it was outnumbered by translation, and at *Idea*, it received the same number of votes as speaking, but was given much lower priority, appearing predominantly at the bottom of the scale. The third place was taken by translation, which may be surprising, considering the current trends to exclude the students' mother language from ELT. In particular, translation obtained as many points as writing at *Glossa* and

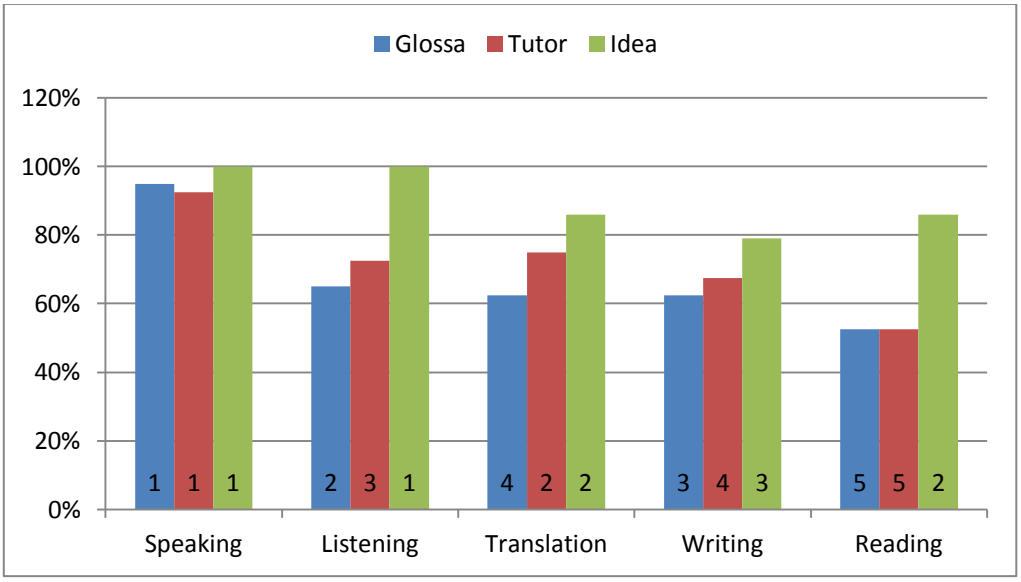
as reading at *Idea*, but in both cases it ranked higher in order of importance, which was decisive in the final count.

Writing, marked 63 times altogether, was placed fourth. At *Glossa*, it obtained an equal number of votes as translation, but ranked lower in priority; at *Idea*, it occupied the very last position, despite receiving only one point less than the next-to-last skills of reading and translation. Finally, seemingly the least favoured skill was reading, chosen by just over half of the respondents at both *Glossa* and *Tutor* and 12 times at *Idea*, which were sufficient to rank second at *Idea* but could not dramatically affect the overall score.

Table 11: Preference of Language Skills at *Glossa, Tutor, Idea*

Language Skills	Glossa		Tutor		Idea		**Total**		
	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	**Σ**	**%**	**Ranking**
Listening	65	2	72.5	3	100	1	**69**	**73**	**2**
Reading	52.5	4	52.5	5	86	2	**54**	**57**	**5**
Writing	62.5	3	67.5	4	79	3	**63**	**67**	**4**
Speaking	95	1	92.5	1	100	1	**89**	**95**	**1**
Translation	62.5	3	75	2	86	2	**67**	**71**	**3**

Graph 9: Language Skills Preference at *Glossa, Tutor, Idea*[13]



Based on the results presented above, it can be concluded that post-secondary students are interested in practising and improving all language

[13] Reasons are ordered from left to right in order of overall importance. Their ranking at individual schools is indicated by the number inside the respective column.

skills, with an emphasis on speaking and listening, and, perhaps surprisingly, not neglecting either the skill of translation, which has been, in the course of time nearly ousted from ELT.

3.3.16 Other Areas to be Improved

In the last three, open-ended questions the respondents were encouraged to express their experience, ambitions and expectations regarding learning English. Question 16 invited them to list any areas which they would especially like to focus on in the course. The questionnaire revealed that 43, that is, nearly half of the 94 respondents would appreciate deepening their knowledge of the history, political systems, art, literature, customs, etc. of English-speaking countries, in Czech known under the cover term *reálie*, which corresponds to *Cultural Studies* or *Culture Background Studies* (Průcha 2005: 81) in English. In other words, besides acquiring linguistic competences, post-secondary students would like to develop their inter-cultural competence too. Among other, sporadically articulated wishes were, for instance, ambitions to expand vocabulary, to improve communication skills and to learn to react quickly to questions asked by foreigners. A few students also wanted to work on refining their accent and pronunciation; translation was mentioned once.

3.3.17 Course Expectations

Question 17 sought to discover what expectations and preferences, out of and on the top of those explicitly mentioned in the previous sections of the questionnaire, the students had. The word pronounced most often in connection with course expectations was ‘communication’ and its derivatives: improve communication skills, communicate fluently, become fluent, make myself understood, understand a native English speaker, improve speaking skills, become a confident speaker, speak fluently, learn to use English actively, etc. These desires were expressed 42 times in total. Intertwined with the ability to communicate were other wishes (expressed once each), such as: eliminate internal block, lose inhibitions, make reactions in English automatic, and make my English usable.

These were followed by 39 rather general formulations like: improve my English, increase the level of my English, improve my English to be able to travel, to find a job, and similar. 12 respondents wished to expand their vocabulary, four desired to perfect their grammar, two expressed their need to improve their listening skills and one wanted to improve his/ her reading skills in order to be able to read long and complex academic texts.

The course was considered as preparation for an internationally acknowledged ESOL exam and preparation for university entrance exams by five and three respondents, respectively. One attended the course with the prior aim of obtaining a certificate. Among other wishes, each expressed once or twice only, were, for instance: an entertaining and effective way of learning; drill and hard work, individual approach, a school trip to the UK, meeting new people, etc.

To summarize, students come to post-secondary courses with a wide range of various expectations, two of which particularly stand out: to learn to communicate and to speak fluently. A considerable number of students also wish to expand their vocabulary and to learn English in an entertaining but effective way. These desires should be taken into consideration not only when creating the course syllabus, but also when planning individual lessons.

3.3.18 Previous Experience with Learning English

Finally, in the very last question of the questionnaire, students were encouraged to describe their previous experience with learning English, either positive or negative. The objective was to find out what students especially appreciate when learning English and which practices and situations should be avoided.

From the positive comments the following can be highlighted: satisfaction with certain textbooks and teaching materials (*Horizons, New Headway, Maturita Solutions*, textbooks containing both listening exercises and translation; the *Bridge* magazine); practical, active and entertaining lessons and communication-oriented lessons conducted in English only; learning English via songs, films without dubbing or subtitles, presentations and projects, and similar. Especially appreciated were long-term stays in English-

speaking countries, including a language course at Oxford and an au-pair stay in the UK. Besides these specific notes, more general formulations were recorded too: 'I have always had great teachers, good textbooks and effective teaching methods', 'I was more or less satisfied with everything', 'at secondary school we had a teacher who always knew how to engage and motivate us, her lessons were interesting and entertaining,' to name a few.

The predominance of positive comments could lead to a false conclusion that all the respondents' experience with learning English was positive. Unfortunately, several flaws were exposed too. For instance, the respondents complained about boring and badly organized classes, excessive use of Czech in English lessons, lack of speaking and communication, lack of homework, zero motivation and encouragement, a large number of students in one class (up to 35), prohibition to use dictionaries, focus on receptive skills rather than production, repetitive conversation topics, following only the textbook and an overall lack of variation.

Also former teachers came under criticism: 'our secondary school teacher did not teach us anything,' 'the teacher did not pay equal attention to all students in the class – he worked only with the strong ones,' 'our English teacher was racist and hated the Czech Republic and hated us,' 'our teacher at secondary school was an alcoholic and did not teach us anything,' ' our teacher had terrible pronunciation,' 'I prefer British English to American English, but all my teachers were American,' to quote a few. Other complaints included: frequent changing of teachers, even during the school year; incompetent and unqualified teachers at secondary vocational schools and teachers indifferent to students' needs and wishes.

To sum up, based on the comments collected, the most appreciated seem to be entertaining but effective lessons with a lot of opportunities and encouragement to speak in English and communicate in life-like/ everyday situations; learning through projects and presentations, trips, courses and long-term stays abroad. Again, this should be taken into account when planning the course as well as individual lessons.

3.4 End-of-course Feedback

The contents and wording of this final, 6-question feedback were heavily influenced by the change of legislation in January 2012, described in detail in Chapter 2.3.2.4. As a result of this change, the questionnaire sought not only to discover whether the students were satisfied with the course and whether their expectations were fulfilled, as originally planned, but also, principally, to anticipate what impact the new legislation would have on the future of post-secondary courses in general. The change of the legal conditions for the post-secondary study and its expected adverse effect on the course costs were explained in the introduction to the questionnaire. With respect to the seriousness of the matter, the questionnaire was composed in Czech in or$der to avoid potential confusion or misunderstanding. A sample questionnaire can be found in Appendix III, located at the end of the thesis.

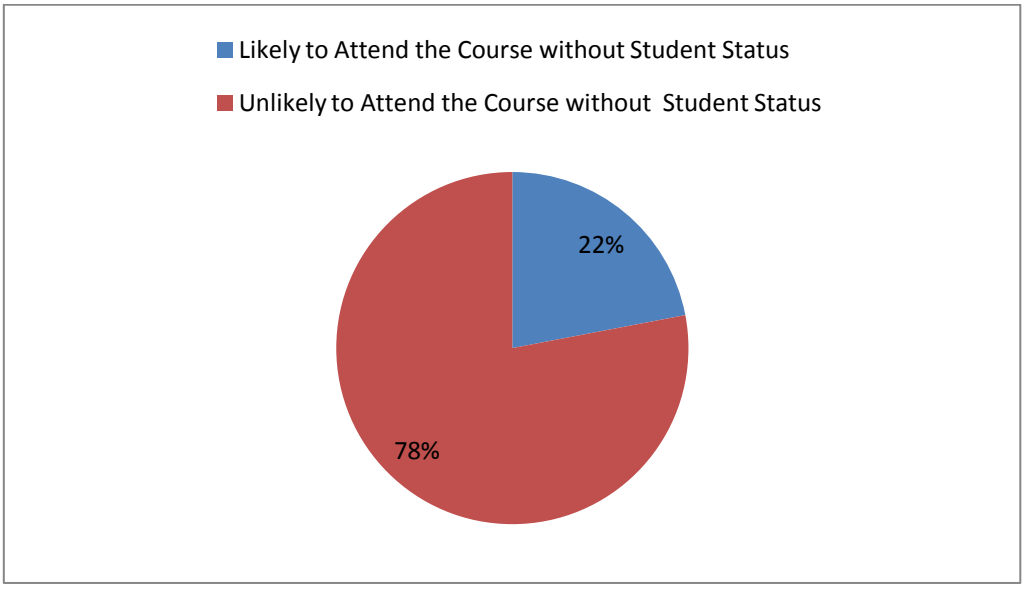
The end-of-course questionnaire was filled in by 91 out of the expected 94 respondents, since three *Idea* students were absent when the questionnaire was presented. In particular, the questionnaire was completed by 40 respondents from *Glossa* (25 respondents from the two B2 groups and 15 from the B1 group), 40 respondents from *Tutor* (9 from the False Beginners (A1) group, 13 from the two Pre-Intermediate (A2) groups, 13 from the two Intermediate (B1) groups and 5 from Upper-intermediate (B2) group), and 11 respondents from the single B2 class at *Idea*.

3.4.1 Impact of the Change of Legislation

The first, vitally important question enquired whether the respondents would have enrolled on the course even if they had been deprived of the student status and thus had had to face the increased costs. This was a yes-no question, but enough space was provided in case the respondents wished to add a commentary or explanation. At all three language schools, the prevailing answer was *no, I would not*. In total, 71 out of the 91 respondents (78%), that is the vast majority, would not have attended the course without the student status (in particular, 80% respondents from *Glossa*, 77.5% from *Tutor* and 73% from *Idea*). The various comments against the post-secondary courses were, for instance, ‘we are not millionaires,’ ‘it depends on my income,’ ‘my orphan’s

pension depends on the student status,' 'I would have probably chosen a private university,' and 'it would be too expensive.'

Graph 10: Potential Post-secondary Clients after the Legislation Change



With mere 22% of respondents claiming that they would have enrolled on the course even without the social security support, because, to quote a few, they 'already go to work,' or 'have graduated from a university,' (cf. also Graph 1 in Chapter 3.3.2), it is obvious that the amendment to the currently valid decree is likely to bring about the end of this form of study.

3.4.2 Fulfilment of Course Expectations

In the second yes-no question the respondents were asked to indicate whether the course had met their expectations or not. 38, that is 95% of the 40 students at *Glossa* were fully satisfied with the course. At *Tutor*, the results were not so straightforward, since 14 (35%) students claimed the course had not come up to their expectations. Yet, with 65%, the positive impressions prevailed. On the other hand at *Idea*, all 11 respondents were perfectly content with the course, one noting that it was 'beyond the expectations.' With the overall result of 75 (82%) out of the 91 respondents being satisfied with the post-secondary language course, it is safe to say that the classes are designed and carried out in accordance with the students' requirements and expectations

.

3.4.3 Achieved Progress

Question 3 intended to map the progress the students had achieved. First, the respondents were asked whether they felt that they had made a considerable progress, and if so, in which areas specifically. They were offered four language forms (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling) and four basic language skills (listening, reading, writing, writing) to choose from, with the possibility to tick one or more options, and they were encouraged to list any other aspects, such as translation skills, cultural competence, etc., if relevant.

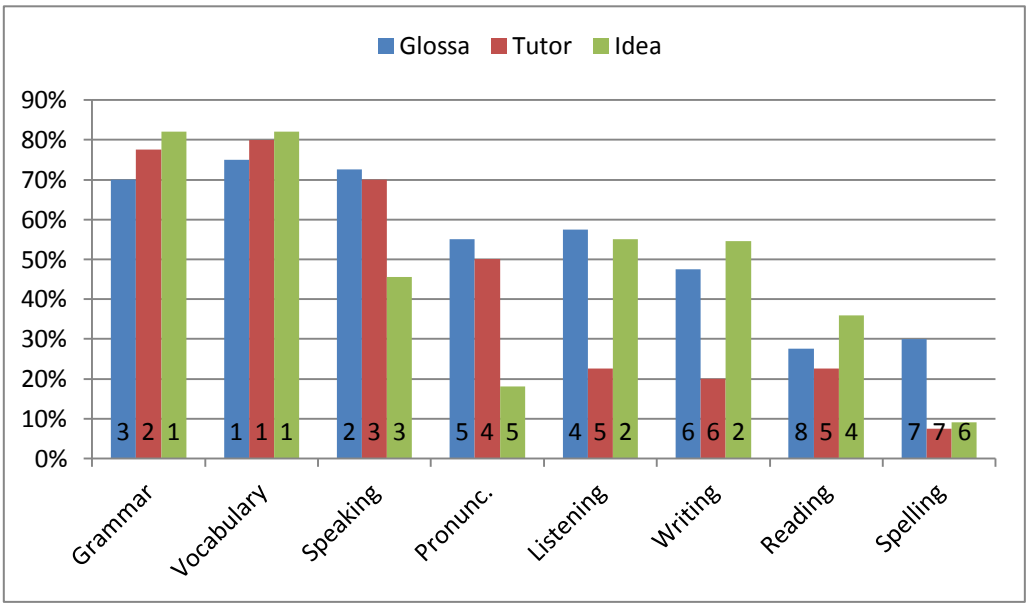
At *Glossa*, only two of the 40 respondents did not perceive any particular progress, whereas the vast majority, 95% had, presumably, improved, particularly in the following (arranged in descending order): vocabulary (75%), speaking (72.5%), grammar (70%), listening (57.5%), pronunciation (55%), writing (47.5%), spelling (30%) and reading (27.5%). Under 'other areas' the improvement in dictionary skills and the loss of inhibitions to speak English were mentioned.

Analogously, 95% of *Tutor* students had improved in at least one of the suggested areas, namely in vocabulary (80%), grammar (77.5%), speaking (70%), pronunciation (50%), listening and reading (both 22.5%), writing (20%) and in spelling (7.5%). All 11 *Idea* respondents confirmed that they had achieved a substantial progress, especially in: grammar and vocabulary (82% each), listening and writing (54.5% each), speaking (45.5%), reading (36%), pronunciation (18%) and spelling (9%). Neither at *Tutor*, nor at *Idea* were any other areas highlighted.

Table 12: Perceived Progress by Language Area

Language forms / skills	Glossa		Tutor		Idea		**Total**		
	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	**Σ**	**%**	**Ranking**
Grammar	70	3	77.5	2	82	1	**71**	**78**	**1**
Vocabulary	75	1	80	1	82	1	**68**	**75**	**2**
Pronunciation	55	5	50	4	18	5	**44**	**48**	**4**
Spelling	30	7	7.5	7	9	6	**16**	**18**	**8**
Listening	57.5	4	22.5	5	54.5	2	**38**	**42**	**5**
Reading	27.5	8	22.5	5	36	4	**24**	**26**	**7**
Writing	47.5	6	20	6	54.5	2	**33**	**36**	**6**
Speaking	72.5	2	70	3	45.5	3	**62**	**68**	**3**

Graph 11: Perceived Progress by Language Area[14]



Altogether, 96%, that is, the overwhelming majority of all the 91 students, perceived a remarkable progress in at least one, but mostly in more of the language areas with vocabulary, grammar and speaking in the lead. From the comparison of the results in Table 12 and Graph 11 above with the initial expectations expressed in the needs analysis and summarized in Tables 10 and 11 and Graphs 8 and 9 (Chapters 3.3.14 and 3.3.15), it is obvious that the language areas the respondents wished to work on most largely coincide with those they had actually made progress in.

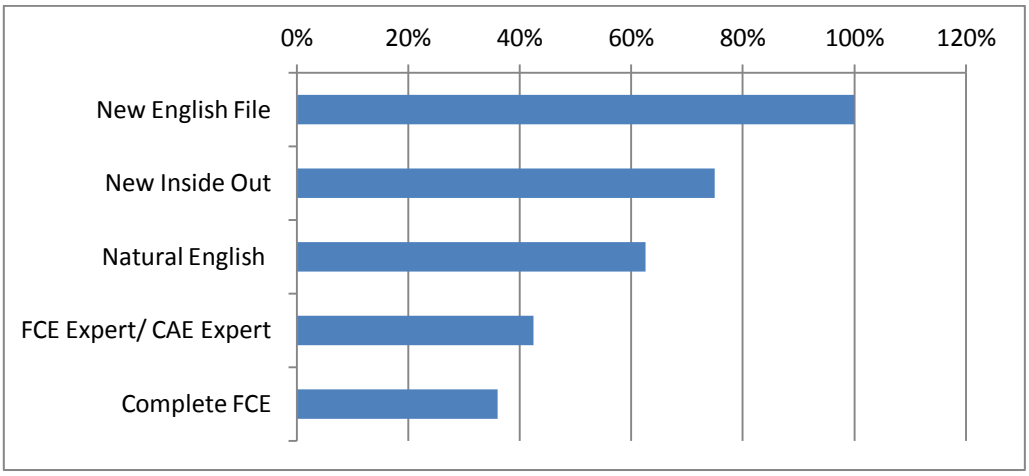
3.4.4 Satisfaction with Core Textbooks

Questions 4 and 5 were devised to monitor the popularity of the teaching materials used in the course. First, Question 4 presented a list of textbooks prescribed by the Academic Management. Since each school uses different materials, the questionnaire was prepared in three different versions, enumerating only the textbooks relevant to each school. The sample questionnaire in Appendix III is the version designed for *Glossa*, containing *New English File* and *Natural English*. Apart from Question 4, however, the three forms were identical. Moreover, the respondents could express their satisfaction with any other in-class teaching materials used.

[14] The reasons are ordered from left to right in order of the overall importance. The ranking of the factors at individual schools is indicated by the number within the respective columns.

From the two core textbooks at *Glossa*, *New English File*, proved to be especially popular – all 40 respondents were satisfied with it. With *Natural English*, the results were not so positive, although 62.5% of respondents were in favour of the book. Still, there were 15 students who found the book unsatisfactory, with comments like 'unattractive,' 'useless' and 'should be replaced.' The other materials, including *City & Guilds* exam materials, were considered satisfactory by 82.5% of the students; 17.5% left the item blank.

Graph 12: Textbooks Popularity



In *Tutor* version, the list of textbooks contained: *New Inside Out* and PET tests, *FCE Expert* and *CAE Expert*, depending on the level. Exactly three quarters of the respondents were satisfied with *New Inside out*, 22.5% were not fully satisfied with it and one respondent marked neither of the two options. The exam-preparation materials were perhaps not so relevant for the Beginner and Pre-Intermediate students, who, in most cases, did not intend to take a Cambridge exam, and thus did not use the books. As a result, exactly half of the respondents left the item blank. From the rest, 17 (42.5%) were satisfied with *FCE Expert* or *CAE Expert* and 3 (7.5%) were not. Other materials, mostly grammar books used in grammar classes, were popular with 57.5% of the respondents, one highlighting the *Language Practice* series by Michael Vince. The remaining 17 (42.5%) did not fill the item in.

Idea version comprised *New English File* and *Complete FCE*. *New English File*, like at *Glossa*, achieved 100% satisfaction. Most students (63%) did not respond to the question regarding *Complete FCE*, since (as the class

teacher explained afterwards) they had started with the textbook shortly before the questionnaire collection, so the students did not have sufficient experience with the book yet. Still, four respondents marked the textbook as satisfactory. Other materials, including grammar textbooks and the *Bridge* magazine, were positively evaluated by 82% students, two left the item blank.

As can be seen in Graph 12, definitely the most popular is the *New English File*, achieving 100% positive evaluation both times, followed by *New Inside Out* with 75% and *Natural English* with 62.5%.

3.4.5 Other Popular Teaching Material

Question 5 was an open-ended question, enquiring about other books students had experience with and would have preferred in the course. As expected, the majority of the 91 students (64%) did not seem to orientate themselves enough in the ELT textbook market and, consequently, either left the item unfilled or explicitly stated they did not know any suitable textbooks. A considerably smaller proportion of students (22%) considered the prescribed materials to be the satisfactory, with occasionally comments like 'these are the best textbooks I know,' 'I am completely satisfied with these textbooks' and 'I would not replace the textbooks, but I would like to work with the *Bridge* magazine' (all these comments were made by *Glossa* students).

Mere 13 respondents (out of which 8 were from *Tutor*) made some concrete suggestions, namely Murphy's *Grammar in Use* (four times), *Headway* (twice), and *Horizons*, *Lifelike*, *New Cutting Edge*, *Time to Talk*, 'all Oxford textbooks' and FCE or TOEFL preparation materials were each mentioned once. Most of these books, however are not suitable for post-secondary courses, be it because they are frequently employed at secondary schools (*Headway, Horizons, Time to Talk*, see Graph 6 in Chapter 3.3.10) or because they are designed for self-study (*Grammar in Use* series) or as a supplementary rather than sole teaching tool (*LifeLike*, which specializes in developing learners' cultural competence). *New Cutting Edge*, on the other hand, has a topic-based syllabus prioritizing communication and vocabulary over the other language forms and skills and thus does not comply with the demands of principled eclecticism.

3.4.6 Other Observations

The very last item of was an open-ended question encouraging respondents to express any impressions, opinions and observations about the organization of the course, the teaching methods, textbooks, teachers and the like, especially the very positive or very negative ones.

At *Glossa*, the positives greatly outweighed the negatives (50: 12). 21 remarks expressed general satisfaction with the course, for instance, 'this course surprised me a lot – I am more than satisfied,' 'after 13 years, I enjoy going to school,' 'post-secondary courses are generally useful and it is a pity that this form of study will finish,' 'the course helped me to improve my English in a very short time. I am not afraid to speak any more,' and similar. 13 students positively evaluated the teachers and their approach, appreciating especially their helpfulness, willingness to deal with difficulties, their energy, patience and level of English proficiency. The quality of the organization of the course and the effectiveness of the methodology were praised by 10, who liked, for instance, the variety of class activities, the large amount of revision, the entertaining form of learning 'thanks to frequent games' and the 'fun in class'. Two students appreciated the textbook and the teaching materials 'the teacher hands out, because they are clearly arranged and I do not have to take almost any other notes;' another two liked the class atmosphere. Also at *Idea* the general positives prevailed (6:1), for instance, 'I am satisfied with this course in all respects', 'great teachers, great classmates,' 'the post-secondary course will help me with my English in the future. Thank you.'

At *Tutor*, the positive and negative comments were fairly balanced (36: 37). Most (15) comments concerned the teachers' helpfulness, professional competence and active approach, six highlighting especially the work of native speakers, because 'they speak English only,' they are 'always well prepared' and 'able to engage us.' 12 respondents expressed positive impressions from the entertaining methods, varied techniques and effective organization of the course, appreciating, in particular, 'continual revision of grammar and vocabulary,' 'presentations and workshops,' 'intensive practising of new vocabulary', 'emphasis on pronunciation and grammatical accuracy' and

'immediate error correction.' Five comments expressed general satisfaction with the course and the progress made; four appreciated the textbooks.

Although they are in minority, it is especially the negative comments which can help the teachers and course organizers to identify the flaws and attempt at their correction. At *Glossa*, the criticisms were quite varied; the only two which repeated concerned the lack of different class levels, inaccurate placement into the levels and its consequences (five times) and the equipment of the classrooms (problems with heating and the lack of video equipment) (twice). Other comments (mentioned once each) were: '*Natural English* is very bad', 'I expected more study of grammar and fewer games,' 'I expected more, I would not recommend the school,' 'what is missing are cultural studies,' 'I would like to do more presentations.'

At *Tutor*, 17 respondents criticized the teachers, especially the frequent changing of grammar teachers during the school year, the inability of Czech teachers to engage students and make the classes enjoyable, their overuse of Czech, but also the unprofessional approach of some teachers, especially their repetitive late comings, moodiness and poor lesson preparation. 8 comments were associated with the slow pace of classes, their monotony and the lack of strict approach, quoting, for example, 'more demands could be placed on students, the time could be better made use of,' 'the classes could be livelier,' 'I do not like spending 90 minutes on one activity,' 'I do not like 'killing' the time with something meaningless'. Five respondents complained about a lack of speaking; three were concerned with an excess of grammar; and two students would like to use grammar books more and do more listening. At *Idea*, the only criticism expressed explicitly was, 'I do not see any benefits from having more teachers beside our class teacher.'

In sum, although positive impressions prevail, there is still space for improvement at all three schools and teachers and course organizers should strive to remedy the problems by, for instance, offering entertaining, varied and balanced lessons, providing adequate technical equipment and employing the most suitable teaching materials, taking into account not only the economic, but also, and mainly, their educational value.

3.5 Recommendable Teaching Materials

3.5.1 Core Textbook

As can be seen from the analysis of Questions 4 and 5 of the end-of-course feedback summarized in Graph 12, clearly the most popular textbook is ***New English File*** (NEF), used at *Glossa* and *Idea*. NEF is a general English course for young adult and adult learners published by Oxford University Press, whose co-authors are Clive Oxenden, Christina Latham-Koenig, and (in some editions) Paul Seligson. Using the textbook evaluation criteria suggested in Chapter 2.2.5.2 as a loose guideline, the NEF series is evaluated below[15].

The NEF is a comprehensive teaching material available for six **levels** (Beginner, Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-intermediate, and Advanced), each level comprising a Student's Book (SB) with English-Czech wordlist (in some editions), a Workbook (WB) with an answer key booklet and Student's MultiROM with audio and video self-study material, a Teacher's Book (TB) with Test and Assessment CD-ROM, Class audio CDs, and a Class DVD. In addition, extra support for both teachers and students is provided by respective Teacher's and Student's websites. The teacher's site provides, for instance, CEFR Mapping Guide, downloadable extra ideas and materials, crossword maker, cloze maker and more. The student's site contains extra practice for all components of the SB, plus weblinks, games, and a mini phrasebook of functional language.

A digital version of the SB for interactive whiteboard is available in the form of *iPack*. Moreover, the latest, third edition of NEF, announced in spring 2012, is enhanced with new digital in-class as well as out-of-class components, including: *iTools* (a digital version of SB, WB and TB for interactive whiteboard, which includes audio, video, interactive activities, PowerPoint grammar presentation, vocabulary flashcards, and an interactive sounds chart), *iTutor* and DVD-ROM for home-study and further practice, *iChecker* CD-ROM (a digital testing tool for students), and *Pronunciation App* for mobiles with interactive features such as 'touch and listen', 'record and compare' and

[15] The NEF used at *Glossa* and *Idea* are based on British English and, although *American English File* is also available, it will not be evaluated here.

pronunciation games. All these digital components are likely to appeal to post-secondary students, since today's adolescents and young adults generally appreciate the use of technologies in learning, which can greatly increase their motivation and promote their learning autonomy.

As to other supplements, previous editions of NEF were accompanied by *Business Resource Books*, a collection of photocopiable resources for working or pre-work students. In 2011, a completely new material, ***Culture Link***, written by Donatella Fitzgerald and Rachel Harraway, extended the NEF set. NEF *Culture Link*, intended for B1 and B2 levels, consists of 27 self-contained lessons dealing with various social, cultural and political aspects of the English-speaking world. Each lesson develops all four basic language skills, with a special focus on discussion skills, and suggests a project where students can further research the topic through a series of guided activities. In post-secondary courses, *Culture Link* would be suitable especially in culture-focused classes, since it can, in a familiar format, introduce the learners to some useful information about English-speaking countries and raise their cultural awareness, which, as both the initial and the final questionnaires show, is exactly what post-secondary students desire.

The **price** of individual components does not considerably exceed that of comparable textbooks (e.g. *New Inside Out*) and, considering cost versus quality, it is safe to say that NEF offers good value for money. In particular, the going price of the two components students are usually required to buy is 520 CZK for SB and 310 CZK for WB with CD-ROM. It is also possible to buy a MultiPack version containing both SB and WB, but, since each MultiPack covers only half of the textbook, for instance units 1-3, this option is more suitable for courses with far fewer lessons than for post-secondary courses. The other NEF components cost, on average, as follows: TB with Test and Assessment CD-ROM: 720 CZK, a set of class CDs: 920 CZK, DVD: 775 CZK, *iPack* for multiple computers: 21,320 CZK. The *Culture Link* pack, including SB, Audio CD and Class DVD, costs 202 CZK, teacher's notes and tapescripts are available on the OUP website for free.

As to the textbook itself, it has an attractive, well elaborated graphic design, a convenient format, high-quality paper, binding and print, and an easy-

to-follow **layout**. The SBs consist of seven units (or nine in the case of NEF Elementary and Pre-intermediate) termed *Files*, which are visually distinguished from one other by different colouring, which facilitates the access to individual units and corresponding end-of-book activities. Each *File* is divided into three four-page teaching sections, A, B, and C (or four two-page sections in NEF Elementary and NEF Pre-intermediate), followed by a one-page *Practical* or *Colloquial English*, a one-page *Writing* and a two-page *Revise & Check* sections. Knowing that the proportion of the page an exercise takes up in the book corresponds to the time needed to carry it out in class and that every two pages roughly correspond to one 90-minute lesson largely facilitates lesson and course planning. Moreover, the same number-and-letter differentiation is used in the accompanying WB and student's website, both of which provide extra practice in all the language areas from the main text and are thus a solid resource for homework assignments.

The back matter of the SB abounds in extra material, most importantly: *Grammar Bank* (comprising grammar rules, examples and practice exercises), *Vocabulary Bank* (presenting and practising vocabulary related to the *File*'s topic) and *Sound Picture Bank* for pronunciation, all of which are clearly referred to from the core of the book and provide a single, easy-to-access source of reference for outside-class learning.

As mentioned above, from Beginner to Intermediate levels, each *File* contains a *Practical English* section, in which functional language comes alive thanks to an underlying storyline featuring two main characters, Mark (American) and Allie (British), cleverly intermingling the two major variants of English. Upper-Intermediate and Advanced students, on the other hand, are regularly exposed to a moderate amount of unedited authentic *Colloquial English*, which gives them opportunity to get accustomed to different speeds and accents as well as to expand their knowledge of informal phrases and idioms. Both these features are linked with video DVD for in-class use as well as Student's MultiROM for home-study. Yet, the presentation and practice of everyday phrases is rather monotonous and dull. Hopefully, this flaw will be removed in the new edition, which promises a brand new real-world *Practical English* with documentary videos filmed on location in London and New York.

Overall, NEF complies with the contemporary trends in methodology in that it is based on the **approach** of principled eclecticism, offering an appropriate balance of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and covering grammar structures, topic-based vocabulary as well as functional language. Moreover, unlike other comparable general textbooks, NEF systematically drills also pronunciation and intonation. NEF pronunciation scheme is based on the *International Phonetic Alphabet* (IPA), and enhanced with a unique system of sound pictures, which give clear sample words to help students identify and produce the sounds. What is missing, though, is a systematic focus on translation and dictionary skills.

The sequencing of the syllabus is logical and develops not only from unit to unit, but also from level to level. The book contains a variety of topics, most of which are appropriate and engaging for post-secondary students, although some areas, like work experience, business and advertising, may require slight modifications, especially with less experienced groups. Thanks to regular revision, the **content** of the NEF is mostly up-to-date and the language is presented in a context that is relevant to an active adult's everyday life.

The texts used in NEF, written as well as spoken, are based on a wide variety of authentic materials, which are sensibly adapted to suit the skills and needs of students at the given level and present various types of tasks, which always lead to the other skills practiced in the unit. On the whole, all tasks in NEF are well thought out with a good combination of pre-, in- and post-task activities. The practice material is logically arranged from controlled to free practice, and there are possibilities for both study and activation in both the language forms and the skills areas, all with an emphasis on communication of meaning rather than purely mechanical practice. However, some practice exercises, especially in *Grammar* and *Vocabulary Banks, Practical/ Colloquial English* and the *Revision & Check* sections are somewhat repetitive and unimaginative. Writing practice, although well designed to include 'macro' as well as 'micro skills', such as punctuation, spelling, and linking devices, on the other hand, could be slightly more extensive.

In all components of NEF the instructions are written in a clear, straightforward language and supported with easy-to-understand graphic

symbols, so they are, in most cases, comprehensible even without the teacher's commentary. The textbooks are enlivened with a reasonable amount of didactically suitable photographs and illustrations, which, together with the variety of texts, activities and tasks, are likely to motivate students to talk.

The course is accompanied by an easy-to-use **Teacher's Book**, which is a reliable methodological guide even for fairly inexperienced teachers, as it contains not merely the answers to the exercises in the SB, but also a detailed lesson plan for each *File*, recommended methods for the presentation of grammar, and detailed instructions to each and every activity in the book. Moreover, tips for alternative and supplementary activities are provided, which enable the teacher to tailor the material to the individual learners' needs. Another point to be praised is the excellent photocopiable resource bank reinforcing and reviewing the key language points of each unit through songs, games and communicative activities. Moreover, the TB contains a Test and Assessment CD-ROM with seven *File Tests*, an *Entry* and an *End-Of-Course Test*, including methodological guidance to help teachers assess their students' competences according to the CEFR level. The compatibility with the CEFR, *City & Guilds* and other ESOL exams is, after all, the NEF's prime advantage.

To sum up, apart from a few minor criticisms, NEF is an exceptionally good EFL textbook. It is sound, challenging and stimulating for the student and very supportive for the teacher. The main strength of the NEF series is its solid methodological syllabus with clear objectives, interesting subject matter, and genuine opportunities for practice and activation. The range of supplementary material is unusually wide, most exercises and activities are enjoyable and at the same time serve their didactic function. Still, a progressive teacher will have to, from time to time, adapt, reorder or replace the activities in order to cater for the age, interests and needs of his/ her particular students. With all the positive features and considering the fact that it is scarcely used at Czech secondary schools, for post-secondary courses of English, NEF seems optimal.

3.5.2 Recommendable Supplementary ELT Materials

In addition to the core textbook, the generous time allotment allows the teachers to use also a plenty of supplementary teaching material to reinforce

and practise the learnt language in an effective and enjoyable way. Based on my own teaching experience, recommendations from colleagues and a mini-research I have done for the purpose of this thesis, the following materials can be made use of, to a reasonable extent, to enhance the post-secondary classes. Under no circumstances, however, is this to be considered an exhaustive list of supplementary materials post-secondary teachers have at their disposal.

Photocopiable **grammar** materials suitable for in-class use are, for example: *Games for Grammar Practice, Grammar Practice Activities* (published by Cambridge University Press, hereinafter only CUP), *Grammar Games and Activities 1* and *2* and *Intermediate Grammar Games* published by Pearson Longman. Grammar materials suitable especially for self-study, and partly also for classroom use include *Active Grammar, Essential Grammar in Use, English Grammar in Use, Advanced Grammar in Use* (CUP) and *Oxford Living Grammar, Oxford Practice Grammar* and *Natural Grammar* by Oxford University Press (OUP). On the top of the printed material, all the OUP's grammar resources are accompanied by a range of free extra on-line practice.

For in-class **vocabulary** practise, teachers can employ, for instance, CUP's *Collocations Extra, Games for Vocabulary Practice* and *A Way With Words Resource Pack 1* and *2,* Pearson Longman's *Vocabulary Games and Activities 1* and *2* and Penguin's *Have Fun With Vocabulary*. Materials usable for homework assignment (or in-class work if adapted) include: *English Vocabulary in Use, English Collocations in Use, English Idioms in Use, English Phrasal Verbs in Use* (CUP) and *Oxford Word Skills* and *Oxford Word Skills Idioms* and *Phrasal Verbs* (OUP), the latter three again supplied with additional on-line exercises.

Among the suitable photocopiable classroom activities developing individual language **skills** and subskills stand out especially the CUP's resource packs exploiting authentic material and realistic tasks, namely *Advanced Skills*, *Discussions A-Z*, *Listening Extra*, *Reading Extra*, *Speaking Extra*, *Writing Extra* and *Pronunciation Games,* and Thomson-Heinle's *Instant Discussions* and *Taboos and Issues.*

Other suitable materials which can spice up post-secondary English classes are, for example, CUP's *The Book of Days, Quizzes, Questionnaires and Puzzles, Five-Minute Activities, Games for Language Learning, Laughing Matters, Dictionary Activities*. Penguin English Photocopiables series include, especially, *Pair Work 1* and *2*, *Fun Class Activities 1* and *2*, *Group Work*, *Is That What You Mean 1* and *2*, and others. A truly invaluable source of multi-level grammar, vocabulary and conversational activities which require no photocopying or additional preparation is Macmillan's collection of *700 Classroom Activities.*

As follows from the initial and final feedbacks, many post-secondary students would appreciate the opportunity to expand their knowledge of English-speaking countries and their **culture**. Besides the NEF *Culture Link* recommended above, the teachers can utilize, for example, *LifeLike: Multicultural experiences in the English-speaking Word*, published in the Cideb-Black Cat Publishing House, which presents the English-speaking world through authentic articles, songs, statistics mapping social and cultural trends, geographical and historical data as well as extracts from fiction and non-fiction by contemporary artists commenting on aspects of their own culture. The book is supplemented with an audio CD featuring native English speakers and interactive CD-ROM with short film clips and interactive activities.

Apart from this self-contained textbook, several compilations of practical in-class material like *Intercultural Language Activities* (CUP) or *Intercultural Activities* (OUP) can be used to develop culturally and socially appropriate language competence in students. Furthermore, factual information on English-speaking countries can be presented through the *Bridge* magazine published monthly by Nakladatelství Bridge (Bridge Publishing House), which, despite being aimed primarily at secondary school students, will surely appeal to post-secondary students as well. Among the magazine's bonuses are regular audio CDs, a film DVD as well as extra reading for students and methodological support for teachers on the Bridge-online website.

As suggested in Chapter 2.2.5.4, post-secondary courses offer ample space also for active work with **Graded Readers**, and the selection of suitable

publications is really rich. OUP, for example, lists 429 titles for adults and young adults in nine different genres, seven different levels and, in 159 cases, with an accompanying CD or DVD-ROM. CUP offers a narrower range of adult Readers (91), but yet all of them are supplemented with an audio CD, worksheets and lesson plans. Also Macmillan offers a considerable range of products, but definitely the best established Readers series is that by Penguin Books, now a member of the Pearson Group.

Penguin Books offer two kinds of graded material: Penguin Readers for reading at home and Penguin Active Reading, which, on top of the text itself, provide a variety of activities designed to develop reading skills, consolidate vocabulary, and promote writing skills by means of project work. Each book is supported by an interactive CD-ROM with additional activities and the complete audio recording. Every title is complemented also with an activity worksheet containing extra background information, photocopiable resources, teacher's notes and answer keys. Links to on-line catalogues of the above-mentioned publishers, which include a variety of downloadable activities as well as a guide to how Graded Readers can be used, are listed in Bibliography and Reference section under Useful Websites.

3.6 Practical Impact of the Legislation Change

As mentioned in Chapter 2.3.2.4, the amendment to *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll. on Further Study* ratified in January 2012 deprives the students of post-secondary language courses of the student status and the associated financial reliefs. As a result, the overall costs of post-secondary language study will increase by the payment of social and pension insurance and the loss of social benefits. Consequently, a significant drop in demand for these courses is anticipated. It is thus hardly surprising that the legislative measure provoked an intense debate about the justifiability of the action and that two major language school associations, ACERT and AJŠA, united into *Sdružení pro zachování pomaturitního studia jazyků* (Association for Preservation of Post-secondary Study of Languages) with the aim to negotiate with the authorities on possible alteration of the legislation in favour of post-secondary students. In this chapter, the arguments each side puts forward will be summarized.

3.6.1 Reasons behind the Legislative Measure

The amendment to the existing legislation seems to have been motivated by a combination of reasons: first, the government's efforts to reduce expenditure from the state budget in order to curb the ongoing economic crisis, and second, to solve the systemic discrepancies resulting from the absence of integrated legislation. Indeed, as *Legislativní rada vlády* (Legislative Council of the Czech Government) pointed out, *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll. on Further Study* lacks clear specification of the conditions for establishing post-secondary courses as well as for their inspection. The spokeswoman of the MEYS, Renáta Bartková Sodomová, added that the annual insertion of educational institutions into the Appendix to this decree is largely arbitrary and that 'the student benefits may be restored only on condition that the criteria will be modified.'[16] At the same time, based on MEYS press releases it can be assumed that the Ministry doubts the purposefulness and effectiveness of this form of language education and thus does not consider determining of new rules necessary.

In particular, according to MEYS representatives, one-year post-secondary language courses no longer fulfil the purpose for which they were established, that is, to compensate for the absence of proper primary and secondary school language education. Jana Holíková, MEYS press agent, believes that 'this function will be taken over by compulsory *Maturita* exam in foreign languages,' which will guarantee that students 'acquire adequate language knowledge at secondary schools.'[17] Therefore, there seems to be no need to subsidize post-secondary courses, especially in the times of economic crisis. Holíková further predicts that due to increased chances of admission to universities and tertiary technical schools and in view of demographic prognoses according to which a substantial decrease in the number of

[16]Translated from http://zpravy.idnes.cz/studenti-pomaturitnich-jazykovek-budou-platit-pojisteni-planuje-stat-13y-/domaci.aspx?c=A111101_145526_domaci_jj („Pokud MPSV v zákoně upraví zmocnění pro zařazování těchto kursů do vyhlášky lépe než dosud a stanoví podmínky výběru vhodných institucí pomaturitního studia, můžou se výhody pro studenty opět vrátit.")

[17] Translated from http://www.tyden.cz/rubriky/domaci/skolstvi/spatna-zprava-pro-studenty-jazykovych-skol-stat-za-ne-prestane-platit-pojisteni_215251.html („[...] jejich funkci převezme povinná maturita z cizího jazyka, takže potřebné znalosti lidé získají již na střední škole.")

secondary school leavers is expected, post-secondary language courses are likely to receive 'practically a minimum of prospective applicants'[18] anyway.

3.6.2 Counter-arguments

Nevertheless, however well-founded these proclamations may sound, they appear to have certain practical flaws. Numerous language institutions warn that secondary school language education, especially at secondary technical and secondary vocational schools, is yet not of adequately high quality and still needs to be supplemented by further study. The statistics of member schools of ACERT and AJŠA show that language skills of secondary school leavers who come to post-secondary courses are frequently very poor – 'over 60% of all post-secondary students come with initial level beginner or pre-intermediate,'[19] that is, with a level insufficient for genuine communication. The research conducted within this thesis showed that at the three examined schools at least 43% of all 153 post-secondary students entered the course with level A0, A1 or A2. In particular, based on the placement tests there were 17 (35%) students with level A2 or lower at *Glossa* and 49 (54%) at *Tutor*. At *Idea*, although all 14 applicants were, for economical reasons, placed in the B2 group, according to the class teacher's estimate, about a quarter of them did not have the required B1 level at the start of the course.

The claim that the state-regulated system of *Maturita* examination is sufficient a tool for raising the quality of secondary school language education has certain shortcomings too. The results of the first round of the new *Maturita*, which took place in May 2011, are only available as a crude summary of all secondary schools in the country. The sole official data the MEYS released[20] suggest that out of the 98,762 school leavers in total, 60% opted for a FL and 40% for Mathematics. Neither the proportion of individual languages, nor the distribution between the two levels however, is available (cf.

[18] Translated from http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/zpravy/Studenti-prijdou-o-vyhody-Reditelka-jazykovky-nechape-vlada-jasa-209748 („[...] se podle demografických údajů očekává výrazný pokles počtu absolventů středních škol […], a v důsledku toho také prakticky minimální počet potenciálních uchazečů o studium v pomaturitních jazykových kursech.")
[19] Translated from http://www.protext.cz/zprava.php?id=14667 („Přes 60% všech studentů přicházejících do kurzů je na úrovni začátečník až mírně pokročilí [sic], tedy na úrovni nedostatečné pro běžnou pracovní komunikaci.")
[20] Available from http://www.msmt.cz/file/16208

the research within this thesis: 16% of 2011 graduates took *Maturita* in Mathematics and 84% in English, 85% of which opted for level B1 (for details see Chapter 3.3.4). In English, the fail rate was 10.4% at B1 level and 1.3% at B2 level.

Although detailed results from individual schools are not publicly accessible, the MEYS admitted that there were 'considerable differences in language skills between grammar schools and secondary technical schools,'[21] which resulted in postponing the introduction of foreign languages as a compulsory part of *Maturita* examination from the originally planned 2011/12 until 2013/14. Jana Drastichová, a proposer of the postponement, estimated that with compulsory *Maturita* in FL, up to 24% of secondary school students would be unlikely to pass the exam in 2012 and 'at secondary technical and secondary vocational schools the fail rate could rise up to 30-35%.'[22]

This is supported also by my research which proved that a vast majority of post-secondary students came to the analyzed schools from a secondary technical (79%) or secondary vocational school (5%) as opposed to 16% with grammar-school education (cf. Graph 2 in Chapter 3.3.3). It implies that although grammar schools may already be capable of preparing their students well for *Maturita* and university entrance exams in English, FL education at non-grammar secondary institutions keeps lagging behind. This seems to be a valid argument not only for postponing the compulsory *Maturita* in FL but also for preserving state subsidies for post-secondary students, at least until the quality of language education at all types of secondary schools is equal. Yet, it is doubtful whether one year will suffice.

Another deficiency of the assumption that compulsory *Maturita* in FL can fully take over the role of post-secondary language education is the lack of internationally valid certification of the achieved proficiency level, since the *Maturita* certificate is, for the time being, of local, rather than international

[21] Translated from http://www.novamaturita.cz/tiskova-konference-msmt-vysledky-maturitni-zkousky-v-obou-terminech-2011-1404035430.html („Výsledky zkoušek z cizích jazyků napovídají o velmi zásadních rozdílech jazykových dovedností mezi gymnázii a odbornými školami.")

[22] Translated from http://www.ceskaskola.cz/2011/10/jana-drastichova-stredni-odborne-skoly.html („U středních odborných škol a učilišť by toto procento se [sic] mohlo zvýšit na 30 až 35%.")

importance, and is not, with four exceptions, recognized by Czech universities either. In post-secondary courses, on the other hand, the majority of participants take an international ESOL exam and thus obtain an internationally acknowledged certificate, which is valuable for universities as well as for Czech and foreign employers.

Furthermore, Petr Pasek from AJŠA and Jiří Kubeš from *První soukromá škola jazyků v Chrudimi* language school[23] emphasize the economic counter-productiveness of the measure, which can be summarized as: the fewer post-secondary students, the fewer teachers and the lower tax revenues in the state budget. Although both of them illustrate their statements with exact figures, I will be more restrained here, since accurate data are extremely difficult, if not impossible to obtain (cf. Chapter 2.3.1) and any calculations would necessarily have to be a rough estimate.

What is safe to say, however, is that an overwhelming majority of secondary school leavers, if not admitted to the intended field of university study at the first attempt, are likely to reapply for admission the following year (cf. Chapter 3.3.9). So far, unsuccessful university applicants have had basically three options: first, to spend the year studying a FL in a one-year course and retain some of the financial benefits of a secondary school student; second, to start attending a different university or tertiary technical school in order to receive student support from the state, although they may not intend to complete the studies; and third, to register at a local job centre and, at least for some time, claim unemployment benefits, since those planning to reapply to a university are unlikely to find other than occasional part-time jobs.

Based on the data from the end-of-course questionnaire provided in Graph 10, Chapter 3.4.1, it can be assumed that at least 78% of current post-secondary students (which, according to the statistics in Table 2, Chapter 2.3.1, corresponds to almost 4,000 persons) would not have enrolled on a post-secondary course without the associated student benefits. Therefore, the immediate effect of abolishing the student status for post-secondary students seems to be a sharp increase in the number of unemployed school leavers as

[23] Cf. http://www.tyden.cz/rubriky/domaci/skolstvi/spatna-zprava-pro-studenty-jazykovych-skol-stat-za-ne-prestane-platit-pojisteni_215251.html and http://www.pomaturitni-studium.com

well as ‘pseudo-students’ entering a university solely for the financial support from the state. One of the economic advantages of post-secondary study, especially in contrast to study at higher education institutions, is that it cannot be abused since one is entitled to the state support only once, in the year s/he passes the *Maturita* exam, and only on condition that s/he meets the requirement of 75% attendance.

Higher costs can be expected on the side of teachers too. At the moment, the majority of post-secondary teachers work for private institutions and create state revenues in the form of taxes paid in the state budget. After the new decree comes into force, however, many language schools will lose clients and, consequently, some of the teachers may lose their jobs and either apply for a job in the state sector or claim unemployment benefits from the state, both of which will significantly increase public spending.

To conclude, it is estimated that state expenditure in the form of unemployment benefits for school leavers and teachers and social support for ‘pseudo-students’ will exceed the savings on insurance, tax reliefs, child allowance and orphan pensions involved in the subsidy for post-secondary language students.[24] Moreover, secondary school leavers, especially those from technical and vocational schools, will have fewer language skills, therefore a more complicated access to higher education and a disadvantageous position in the local as well as EU labour market, which may increase public expenditure even more.

3.7 Summary of Findings

In this chapter key findings from the individual stages of the research will be highlighted, including an analysis of the data from the two questionnaires, interconnected with conclusions drawn from the study of theoretical material and legislation. First, I will summarize the pedagogical implications and recommend the most appropriate teaching methods, techniques and materials to be deployed in post-secondary courses; afterwards, I will discuss the anticipated practical impact of the legislative change.

[24] For a detailed analysis of anticipated state revenues and expenditure see http://www.pomaturitni-studium.com

3.7.1 Pedagogical Implications

3.7.1.1 Organisation of Post-Secondary Courses

The first stage of the research consisted of a thorough comparison of the organization of post-secondary English courses at the three examined language schools. It emerged that due to the minimum state regulation the schools enjoy a great deal of autonomy; in fact, the only uniting factors between the schools were the overall number of lessons, the day form of study and the maximum number of students in one class, all of which are prescribed by law. The actual timetable, range of class levels, syllabus, number of teachers, textbooks and the placement, progress and final testing differ from school to school.

One of the distinctions worth noting here is the number of co-**teachers** per course, their share of the syllabus and the length of the teaching units each of them is assigned: whereas at *Tutor* and *Idea* each group has a class, a grammar and a skills teacher, *Glossa* divides the course between two teachers only: a Czech teacher, who focuses on general English and exam preparation, and a native speaker, whose main task is to develop the learners' communication and writing skills. Furthermore, unlike at *Tutor*, where the conventional scheme with teachers alternating after two 45-minute lessons is implemented, at *Glossa* and *Idea* teachers teach in 4-lesson blocks, which has numerous advantages, among which especially greater potential for diverse sequencing of the ESA components, more space for in-depth practice and sufficient time for meaningful production stand out. On the other hand, it is more demanding on lesson preparation and classroom management since discipline may be more difficult to maintain.

Another difference between the schools is the number of course levels they have registered with the MEYS to offer. The biggest of the three, *Tutor*, provides up to seven different levels, whereas *Glossa* and *Idea* are authorised to teach classes with target levels B1 and B2 only. As follows from the results of the end-of-course feedback, one or two levels do not suffice; however, a desirable number of levels is, especially due to tight economic situation, increasingly difficult to maintain.

The **syllabus** and the choice of core and supplementary teaching materials employed at individual schools are influenced partly by the type of final exam aimed at (*Tutor* and *Idea* prepare students for various levels of Cambridge ESOL exams and thus use materials like *FCE Expert*, *CAE Gold*, *Complete First Certificate* and *Complete PET*; *Glossa*, an accredited centre for *City & Guilds* international exams, exploits *City & Guilds* approved course books) and partly by incentive schemes offered by publishers. *Glossa* and *Idea* seem to favour OUP's materials including *New English File* and *Natural English* series (the latter at *Glossa* only), whereas *Tutor* gives priority to Macmillan's *Inside Out*, *Reward*, *English Grammar in Context* and similar.

The most sophisticated system of **testing**, according to the research, is that at *Tutor*: placement tests are both written and spoken and are conducted by qualified teachers, progress and final tests are designed centrally on a regular basis. At *Idea*, placement tests cover grammar, vocabulary and all basic skills except for listening, but all other testing is left within the responsibility of individual teachers. To assess the applicants' initial language level, *Glossa* utilizes a rather uninformative, written-only multiple-choice placement test, which, together with insufficient numbers of course levels often results in mixed-level classes, teaching of which places higher demands on the teacher since each language level requires a specific way of teaching. In this respect, the role of proper placement testing is essential and the creation of a more comprehensive test encompassing all language areas must be insisted upon.

3.7.1.2 The Results of the Needs Analysis

Needs Analysis, the first of the two questionnaires, was completed by 94 respondents: 40 from *Glossa*, 40 from *Tutor* and 14 from *Idea*. On average, the respondents had studied English for 10 years before enrolling on the course, which reflects the fact that FL instruction is compulsory for primary school pupils from the third year up and that post-secondary study is established principally for students fresh from secondary school. In particular, 81 of the 94 respondents (i.e. 86%) entered the course immediately upon completion of their secondary school and were, in accordance with the currently valid legislation, entitled to state social support.

At the same time, the 81 students passed the first round of the new, centrally planned *Maturita* in May 2011, in which foreign languages were optional. 68 (84%) of them sat the exam in English, mostly at the B1 level (85%), and the remaining 13 in Mathematics. This statistic implies that whereas the B2 *Maturita* (taken by mere 9% of the 2011 graduates) may certify adequate language skills as asserted by the MEYS, students with a B1 *Maturita* certificate have not yet reached a level of English high enough to be able to communicate effectively and need to improve their skills at a language school. This seems to be especially true for secondary technical schools, whose graduates constitute a vast majority (79%) of post-secondary clients, which supports the MEYS assumption that the quality of FL education at this kind of schools is unsatisfactory and that consequently, the compulsory *Maturita* in FL must be further postponed.

Overall, the ambition to learn to use the language actively in communication was given the highest priority among the reasons for attending one-year post-secondary courses by 86% of respondents. In particular, 40 students (43%) claimed that their aim was to improve the level of language proficiency to at least B2 and another 40 to C1, that is to levels at which learners are able to interact fluently and spontaneously. 55% enrolled on the course with the objective to prepare for an internationally valid ESOL exam; the third most important motive was the prospect of increasing their chances in the local labour market, selected by 52%. The fourth position (with 44%) was taken by the possibility to retain the student status and the associated benefits. Apparently, the least important factors, chosen by 40% each, were the intention to work and/ or study abroad and to prepare for university entrance exams in English. The low position of the latter, however, seems inconsistent with the fact that 64% of respondents had applied for admission to a university before entering the course and 73% intended to apply after completing it.

During the minimum ten years of previous study of English, the students had experienced various teaching methods, most frequently the GTM, *Communicative Approach* and ALM, in this order. With the *Communicative Approach* being most popular, a wide discrepancy between the methods students favour and those traditionally deployed at Czech primary and

secondary schools can be observed. On a more positive note, the second highest number of students found a combination of two or more methods the most effective, which complies with the contemporary trends of principled eclecticism in teaching.

This eclecticism seems to be reflected also in the distribution of preferences for language forms and language skills to be practised in the course. Unanimously the most valued language form was vocabulary, followed by grammar, but pronunciation and spelling were not disregarded either. As for language skills, the most prioritized was speaking, listening ranked second and the third place was taken by translation, which may be surprising given the current trends to exclude L1 from ELT. Writing was placed fourth and seemingly the least favoured skill was reading. It can be concluded that a considerable proportion of respondents are aware of the fact that in order to improve their global language competence it is inevitable to practise all language forms including the so often neglected pronunciation and to develop all language skills in a balanced way.

The needs analysis further revealed that besides linguistic skills, post-secondary students would like to develop their inter-cultural competences too – nearly half of the 94 respondents expressed the wish to deepen their knowledge of history, art, literature, customs and other aspects associated with life in English-speaking countries, which is a conclusive proof that both capital 'C' and small 'c' culture should be incorporated in the course syllabus in order to give the students a well-rounded education in the TL, either as a part of skills- or conversation-oriented lessons with native speakers or in the form of specialized lessons on culture.

Based on the analysis of expectations the students had of the course and their previous learning experience it can be concluded that most valued are the opportunity to learn to communicate fluently, to expand their vocabulary and to learn English in an entertaining but effective way with a lot of projects, presentations and opportunities to practise speaking in everyday situations. These desires should be taken into account not only when creating the course syllabus, but also when planning individual lessons.

3.7.1.3 Results of the End-of-course feedback

The second, end-of-course questionnaire was filled in by 40 students from *Glossa*, 40 from *Tutor* and 11 from *Idea*, that is, 91 altogether. It revealed that post-secondary courses at all three schools had satisfied the expectations of 82% of respondents and that 96%, that is, the overwhelming majority of respondents perceived a remarkable progress, especially in vocabulary, grammar and speaking. From the comparison of these results with the initial expectations expressed in the needs analysis it is obvious that the language areas the respondents wished to work on largely coincide with those they had actually made progress in and that the classes are designed and conducted in accordance with the students' requirements and objectives.

Truly valuable information was gathered from the final item, in which the respondents were invited to express any impressions, opinions and observations about the organization of the course, teaching methods, textbooks, teachers and the like. In total, the positives outweighed the negatives at all three schools. Among the appreciated areas were: the textbooks and teaching materials (the most popular was *New English File*, achieving 100% positive evaluation at both *Glossa* and *Idea*, followed by *New Inside Out* with 75% and *Natural English* with 62.5%); the capacity of the course to improve the learners' English in a short time and to help them lose inhibitions when speaking; the positive approach, professional competence and helpfulness of the teachers; the quality of the class management and the effectiveness of the methodology, especially the variety of activities, intensive practise of grammar and vocabulary, reasonable amount of revision, enjoyable form of learning, frequent utilization of games, competitions and workshops and an emphasis on pronunciation and accuracy.

Although in minority, some criticism was expressed too. Those especially criticised were the insufficient number of and inaccurate placement into class levels (the importance of well-designed and well-conducted placement tests has already been emphasized), the unsatisfactory equipment of classrooms, the deficiencies of certain textbooks (namely *Natural English*) and the lack of cultural studies, useful projects and presentations. Some students expected a more traditional and stricter approach with more grammar drills and

fewer games; others would have preferred a brisker pace, livelier and more enjoyable classes and a complete elimination of Czech from the teaching process.

3.7.1.4 Optimal Teaching Methodology

From the pedagogical-psychological perspective, post-secondary students, typically 19 to 22 years old, share characteristics of both late adolescents and, principally, young adults. In particular, they display the great capacity for learning, the creativity and commitment of the former and the fully developed logical and reasoning powers, self-discipline and perseverance of the latter. This combination, together with substantial exposure to the TL allowed in the course, makes post-secondary students exceptionally able L2 learners (barring 'native-like' pronunciation, which is best acquired in childhood) and the highly intensive one-year course one of the most effective forms of language study.

At the same time, when deciding what and how to teach, psychological (cognitive as well as affective) aspects of both age groups must be taken into account, especially the need for appreciation from their peers typical of adolescents and the wide range of learning experience brought by post-secondary students as adults. The teacher should allow the learners to use their cognitive abilities to learn consciously and encourage them to utilize their idiosyncratic learning styles and preferences to maximise the success in learning. Moreover, the teacher should strive to minimise any potential negative effects of the learners' emotions like anxiety, inhibition, frustration and boredom, generate and sustain their self-confidence and motivation, for instance, by offering tasks which are challenging but achievable, by employing various interactive patterns including pair- and small-group work, by creating a generally positive, stress-free learning environment and by fostering their learning autonomy.

It has already been suggested that the optimal methodology is an eclectic combination of the best components from a number of different teaching methods tailored to each particular class's needs, interests and tastes. An enlightened teacher can draw upon an extensive range of methodological

elements, be it the recently 'revived' translation of the GTM, choral and individual drilling of the ATM or the PPP procedure and its modern equivalent, ***Engage, Study*** and ***Activate***. An erudite post-secondary teacher can, at various stages of teaching, exploit some of the ideas of the 'designer' methods from the 1970s as well. S/he can, for instance, foster the sense of community as in the CLL, promote discovery learning and learner's autonomy as the SW did, utilize music to induce a relaxed atmosphere like in *Suggestopedia*, engage students in kinaesthetic TPR-like activities, use authentic material as the CLT and focus on performing language functions such as apologizing, agreeing or complaining, in and lifelike tasks as in TBL. However, all of these are better to be used as techniques rather than entire and finite methods.

To summarize, the way of teaching should focus on the learners' needs and aim at a balanced development of all language forms and skills, including basic (listening, silent reading, speaking, and writing), specific (translation), and combined (reading aloud, taking notes, intercultural), with giving learners an opportunity to use their language knowledge in meaningful communicative tasks. Ideally, the techniques, tasks and materials the teacher deploys should be varied enough to cater for all the different tastes and interests the learners may have and, in view of the learners' age, should be enjoyable, game-like and competitive and make a reasonable use of information technologies.

3.7.1.5 Optimal Teaching Materials

A well chosen methodology is best supported by a reliable textbook complying with the adopted approach and, if possible, a range of supplementary materials. The first step in selecting a suitable core book for post-secondary classes was eliminating the coursebooks frequently used at secondary schools in order to prevent potential overlap of material. Consequently, based on the data obtained from the needs analysis, the following were disregarded: *New Headway, Maturita Solutions, New Opportunities, Time to talk, Horizons*; *Matrix, Angličtina pro jazykové školy, Getaway, Face 2 Face* and *Eurolingua English*. Next, in accordance with the students' preferences expressed in the end-of-course questionnaire, the most

popular teaching material, *New English File* (NEF), was evaluated using the criteria listed in Chapter 2.2.5.2.

Apart from some minor criticism, NEF indeed seems to be an optimal textbook for post-secondary courses. It is challenging and engaging, it provides the students with genuine opportunities for practice and activation and it serves the required didactic functions. The teacher's support as well as the range of accompanying (audio, video and computer) material is unusually wide, and a creative teacher not afraid of adapting the book activities for his/ her particular class, will maximize the textbook's potential. Considering all the positive features and the fact that it is scarcely used at secondary schools, NEF is ideal.

Moreover, a range of supplementary materials practising grammar, vocabulary and language skills were recommended. Among the resources especially suitable for courses with generous time allowance such as those in post-secondary study, teaching materials focusing on TL culture including the NEF brand new supplement called *Culture Link* and Graded Readers must be highlighted. The former is indispensable in order to be able to interact appropriately within the TL community and the latter can be used both in and out of class to promote the development of the learners' habit of reading as well as a variety of other language skills including writing, speaking and listening.

3.7.2 Practical Implications

One-year post-secondary language study was established in the 1990s with the aim to compensate for the absence of previous FL education. As such, secondary school leavers were motivated to enrol on the courses by being allowed to retain the status of secondary school students and thus receive state social support. However, due to certain loopholes in the legislation, the state support for post-secondary language students is going to be withdrawn. In effect, the costs of post-secondary courses will increase considerably, which, as demonstrated by the data obtained from the end-of-course feedback, will entail a critical decline in post-secondary clients. In the research, 71 of the 91 respondents (78%), the vast majority, would not have attended the course without the student status and the associated benefits.

The assumptions of the MEYS that post-secondary language courses no longer fulfil their purpose and that their function will be fully taken over by compulsory *Maturita* exam in foreign languages are questionable. Firstly, it was demonstrated that secondary school language education, especially at secondary technical and secondary vocational schools, is not yet of adequately high quality and still needs to be supplemented by further study. Secondly, since *Maturita* in FL and its level are, for the time being, optional, students tend to opt for the easier, B1 level, which does not guarantee a real ability to communicate in the language, or they avoid taking the exam altogether. Thirdly, the *Maturita* certificate is not, unlike the certificates from ESOL exams post-secondary students usually take, recognized internationally.

Moreover, the legislative measure appears to be economically counter-productive too, since the anticipated rise in the course costs is likely to induce a considerable decrease in the number of post-secondary clients, courses and teachers, which will not only reduce tax revenues, but also increase public expenditure in the form of unemployment benefits for school leavers and teachers and social, health and pension insurance for 'pseudo-students' at universities. However, maintaining the state support for post-secondary students is an investment which will be recouped, as the courses demonstrably enhance the participants' language skills, enable them to pass a state or an internationally acknowledged language exam and thus increase their chances in the labour market and consequently, bring more revenue into the state budget.

To conclude, since the advantages, both educational and economic, outnumber the disadvantages, instead of abolishing the student benefits, the discrepancies in the legislation should be resolved by specifying the conditions for the establishment of post-secondary courses and by regularly inspecting their activity and criteria fulfilment. In addition, the MEYS could also consider extending the scope of curricular documents to apply not only to language schools authorised to organize state language examinations, but also to private language institutions and thus ensure also the fulfilment of educational objectives.

4 CONCLUSION

The objective of this thesis was twofold. Firstly, I set out to monitor the situation in one-year post-secondary courses of English organised by private language schools in the Czech Republic, to identify potential shortcomings and based on the insights gained from the study of theoretical as well as practical handbooks on linguistic, psycholinguistic and pedagogical principles of teaching English as a foreign language, to recommend the optimal teaching methods and materials. Secondly, since teaching foreign languages in general and teaching languages at private institutions in particular involves pedagogical aspects as well as purely pragmatic ones, it was essential to look into the study also from the political and economic point of view.

In pursuit of the primary objective, I first examined the organization of the courses at three private language schools: *Glossa* and *Tutor* located in Prague and *Idea* based in Hodonín. It turned out that except for the day form of study, the number of lessons and the maximum number of students in one class, that is, factors prescribed by law, the course management at the three schools varied a lot. The greatest differences were detected in the number of teachers per group and their focus, the number of course levels, the choice of textbooks and the thoroughness of progress, final and placement tests.

The analysis of two questionnaires, completed by 94 and 91 post-secondary students, demonstrated that 86% enrolled on the course immediately after finishing their secondary school and were, in accordance with the currently valid legislation, eligible for state social support benefits. 84% of these fresh school leavers took the first round of the centrally planned *Maturita* school-leaving exam in English, mostly opting for the B1 level (85%), which implies that the quality of language education at Czech secondary schools is rather low. This seems to be especially true for secondary technical schools, whose graduates constitute 79% of post-secondary clients.

It can be further inferred that most respondents saw the post-secondary course as a bridge between their first unsuccessful attempt at university study and reapplication. Yet the preparation for the university entrance examination in English does not seem to play a key role in deciding to attend the course. On

the contrary, it was rated as the least important, after the aim to learn to use the language actively in communication (86%), the desire to prepare for an internationally valid ESOL exam (55%), the prospect of increasing the chances in the local labour market (52%), the possibility to retain the student status (44%) and, finally, the intention to work and/ or study abroad (40%).

Based on a brief historical overview of the most influential teaching methods and on the analysis of the preferences expressed in the two questionnaires, it can be concluded that the most suitable way of teaching for post-secondary courses is 'principled eclecticism,' which is an enlightened blend of the best elements of a number of different ideas and methods, which advocates balanced practice and development of all language forms and skills, with a particular emphasis on an abundance of opportunities to use the language in meaningful communicative tasks. Taking into account the principles of the eclectic approach as well as the respondents' textbook preferences and eliminating materials frequently used at secondary schools, *New English File* was evaluated as the optimal textbook for the course.

As emerged from the comparison of the initial and end-of-course questionnaires, the expectations students had at the beginning of the course including the ambition to learn to communicate fluently, to expand their vocabulary, to consolidate their grammar and, above all, to learn English in an entertaining but effective way, were largely (82%) fulfilled. Moreover, 96% of the respondents claimed that they had achieved considerable progress, especially in the areas they had wished to focus on. This, together with the predominance of positive evaluation of the course organisation, teaching methods, materials and teachers shows that this form of language study fully complies with the students' demands and requirements.

Yet from the pedagogical point of view, several shortcomings were identified, the most serious being the lack of systematic teaching of culture, methodical work with Graded Readers, an enlightened approach to translation and thorough training of dictionary skills. The results of the questionnaires imply that numerous students had already realized that cultural competence is an indispensable part of learning a foreign language, without which it is not

possible to interact in the target language society appropriately. For this purpose, specific culture-oriented classes could be incorporated in the syllabus in which, for instance, *New English File Culture Link* could be utilized. Graded Readers, on the other hand, tend to be neglected by both teachers and learners, although they can be used to develop a whole range of competences, including cultural.

Moreover, serious discrepancies were observed in the legislation regulating the one-year language study. Not only are the criteria for establishing the courses unclear, but also a functioning control mechanism with sanctions for breaching the rules is absent. However, the attempt of the *Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports* to resolve the problem by depriving post-secondary students of the student status and the associated benefits seems counterproductive. Indeed, with respect to the fact that the Czech education system is not currently capable of providing pupils with proper language education, the measure which is anticipated to cause a critical decline in post-secondary courses seems premature.

To conclude, the results of the research imply that from the educational perspective, one-year post-secondary language study has numerous positives. Yet these evident pedagogical benefits are vastly outweighed by economic factors and, unless a substantial alteration to the legislative is achieved, the courses, at least in the present form, will probably cease to exist since as a marketable product they will no longer be profitable and private language schools will focus on other, commercially more successful programmes.

5 RÉSUMÉ

Diplomová práce nazvaná *Problematika výuky anglického jazyka v pomaturitním studiu* se zabývá specifiky výuky cizích jazyků v jednoletých kurzech s denní výukou pořádaných soukromými jazykovými školami a určených především čerstvým absolventům středních škol. Cílem práce bylo zmapovat historii a současnost tohoto typu studia, a to jak jeho organizaci, metody výuky a výukové materiály, tak i legislativu, jíž se výuka v pomaturitních kurzech řídí, a na základě studia dostupných materiálů zvolit, ohodnotit a doporučit soubor optimálních metod a učebnic. Vzhledem k nedávné změně legislativy však bylo nutné původní záměr rozšířit o poněkud pragmatičtější oblast, a sice předpokládaný dopad odebrání statusu studenta frekventantům pomaturitních kurzů na existenci těchto kurzů.

Pomaturitní studium jazyků vzniklo v devadesátých letech dvacátého století a jeho posluchači byli vzhledem k absenci předchozího jazykového vzdělání zvýhodněni udělením statusu středoškolského studenta a s tím spojených sociálních výhod. Detailně zmapovat historii a vývoj jednoletého jazykového studia je obtížné, neboť statistické údaje do roku 1996 chybí úplně a v následujících letech jsou velmi kusé. Přesto lze říci, že do školního roku 2010/11 počet soukromých škol poskytujících tento typ studia rostl, zatímco počet jazykových škol s právem státní jazykové zkoušky pozvolně klesal. Podle *Ústavu pro informace ve vzdělávání* ve školním roce 2011/12 zajišťovalo výuku v pomaturitních kurzech 103 soukromých jazykových škol pro 4,458 žáků a 15 škol s právem státní jazykové zkoušky pro 601 žáka.

Pomaturitním studiem jazyků se v této práci rozumí kurzy s denní formou studia zahrnující 20 vyučovacích hodin o délce 45 minut týdně, s maximálním počtem 18 posluchačů ve skupině, trvající jeden školní rok a pořádané v souladu s *Vyhláškou MŠMT a MPSV č. 322/2005 Sb., o dalším studiu, popřípadě výuce, které se pro účely státní sociální podpory a důchodového pojištění považují za studium na středních a vysokých školách* ze dne 15. 8. 2005 (dále jen *Vyhláška č. 322/2005 Sb., o dalším studiu*), a to výhradně právnickými nebo fyzickými osobami zapsanými v Příloze č. 1 této vyhlášky nebo oprávněnými k provádění státních jazykových zkoušek.

Kromě této vyhlášky se však kurzů dotýká řada dalších dokumentů, včetně *Zákona č. 117/1995 Sb., o státní podpoře, Zákona č. 155/1995 Sb., o důchodovém pojištění, Zákona č. 561/2004 Sb., o předškolním, základním, středním, vyšším odborném a jiném vzdělávání (školský zákon), Zákona č. 563/2004 Sb., o pedagogických pracovnících* a *Vyhlášky MŠMT č. 16/2005 Sb., o organizaci školního roku*. Legislativní úprava kurzů je celkově velmi nepřehledná, což byl jeden z důvodů, proč byly některé legislativní podmínky změněny, a to *Vyhláškou MŠMT č. 28/2012 Sb., o dalším studiu, popřípadě výuce, které se pro účely státní sociální podpory a důchodového pojištění považují za studium na středních školách* ze dne 17. 1. 2012, která od školního roku 2013/14 připraví studenty pomaturitního studia o finanční výhody spojené se statusem studenta.

Jelikož odborná literatura zaměřená na výuku jazyků v pomaturitních kurzech prakticky neexistuje, opírá se teoretická část práce o studium textů zabývajících se výukou angličtiny jako cizího jazyka obecně, a to především s ohledem na výuku dospívajících a dospělých. Jistou komplikací byla i absence jednotné odborné terminologie v oblasti vzdělávání, která by usnadnila překlad legislativních a kurikulárních dokumentů z českého originálu do angličtiny. Aby se předešlo pochybnostem a nejasnostem, byl sestaven slovníček nejfrekventovanějších pojmů, který je zařazen na konci této práce.

Ze studia literatury vyplynulo, že významnou roli ve volbě učebních materiálů, témat, aktivit a metod výuky hraje věk žáka. Ten se u frekventantů pomaturitních kurzů pohybuje nejčastěji v rozmezí 19 až 22 let. Z pedagogicko-psychologického pohledu takový žák vykazuje jak znaky dospělého, tak dospívajícího - má již plně vyvinuté kognitivní schopnosti, ale jeho mozek je stále ještě dostatečně plastický, aby byl schopen pojmout velké množství nových informací, a tudíž má obrovskou kapacitu pro učení a zároveň již jistou míru sebekázně a vytrvalosti, což se spolu s velmi intenzívní formou výuky a štědrou časovou dotací kurzu zdá být pro výuku cizích jazyků ideální.

Vzhledem k velikosti pomaturitních skupin je však nutné počítat se značnými osobnostními, intelektovými, jazykovými i sociokulturními rozdíly mezi jednotlivými žáky a usilovat o minimalizaci negativních emocí z nich

pramenících. Jedná se zejména o pocity úzkosti, zábran, frustrace, určitou roli hrají i předchozí zkušenosti s učením jazyků a podobně. Lektor pomaturitního studia se může těchto jevů vyvarovat například tím, že bude volit takové úkoly a interakční vzorce, které nebudou hrozbou pro studentovo sebevědomí. Zároveň je třeba umožnit studentům využívat jejich plně vyvinuté intelektové schopnosti a osvojené učební styly například využitím rozličných podnětů, jak vizuálních, auditivních, tak taktilních a kinestetických. Motivaci lze povzbudit mimo jiné zadáváním rozmanitých, přiměřeně náročných úkolů, které odpovídají zájmům i věku žáků, zahrnují prvky her, soutěží a projektů a hojně využívají dnes již nebytné informační technologie. Celkově je nutné usilovat o vytvoření nestresového prostředí a podporovat žákův aktivní přístup k učení.

S ohledem na dílčí cíl práce – výběr nejvhodnější metody výuky – byl součástí teoretické základny také stručný přehled historicky nejvýznamnějších metod, od gramaticko-překladové, přes audiolingvální až k metodě komunikativní, a vedle těchto tradičních metod také metod alternativních, jako například *Suggestopedie, Silent Way* a *Total Physical Response*, jejichž prvky lze využít i v moderní didaktice. Takový eklektický přístup složený s nejlepších elementů předchozích metod se ostatně zdá být pro pomaturitní kurzy nejvhodnější, neboť klade důraz na rovnoměrný rozvoj všech jazykových prostředků a řečových dovedností, pokud možno včetně překladu, přičemž nabízí dostatek příležitostí k využití nabytých jazykových znalostí v reálných situacích každodenního života.

Eklektickému přístupu k výuce jazyků by měly odpovídat i výukové materiály, a to jak základní, tak doplňkové. Zvláštní důraz by měl být kladen na výuku kultuře, neboť bez odpovídajících kulturních kompetencí nelze v dané cizojazyčné společnosti prakticky fungovat. Pokud není možné do učebního plánu zařadit specializované hodiny věnující se kulturní výchově, pak je vhodné alespoň zprostředkovat osobní setkání studentů se zástupci cílové kultury nebo nepřímý kontakt s danou kulturou prostřednictvím vhodně zvolených filmových a divadelních představení. Kulturní povědomí, stejně jako dovednosti čtení, psaní, mluvení a dokonce i poslechu, je možné rozšiřovat také pomocí zjednodušených textů typu Graded Readers, dostupných v různých jazykových úrovních, věkových kategoriích a žánrech.

Jádrem práce byl pedagogický výzkum rozdělený do tří etap. Nejprve byla porovnána organizace jazykových kurzů ve třech soukromých jazykových školách, a sice v jazykové škole *Glossa* se sídlem v Praze, jazykové škole *Tutor*, konkrétně její pobočce v Praze 1 a jazykové škole *Idea* působící v Hodoníně. Kromě parametrů stanovených *Vyhláškou č. 322/2005 Sb., o dalším studiu* (viz výše) je organizace studia na jednotlivých školách odlišná. Rozdílný je například počet a zaměření lektorů, kteří učí jednu třídu. Zatímco v jazykových školách *Tutor* a v *Idea* v každém kurzu působí tři vyučující – třídní, učitel gramatiky a rodilý mluvčí, v *Glosse* je výuka rozdělena pouze mezi českého lektora a rodilého mluvčího, přičemž český lektor se soustřední na obecnou angličtinu a přípravu na závěrečné zkoušky, zatímco rodilý mluvčí má za úkol rozvíjet především komunikativní dovednosti a psaní.

Školy dále nabízejí rozdílný počet úrovní kurzů a různé typy závěrečných zkoušek. *Tutor*, který je největší vzdělávací institucí ve výzkumu, ročně otvírá až sedm úrovní, zatímco *Glossa* a *Idea* vypisují pouze kurzy s cílovou úrovní B1 a B2. Výběr používaných učebnic závisí na typu závěrečné zkoušky a na finančních výhodách nabízených vydavateli. *Tutor* a *Idea*, které připravují žáky ke zkouškám PET, FCE nebo CAE, využívají učebnice *FCE Expert, CAE Gold, Complete First Certificate* a *Complete PET*, zatímco *Glossa* používá materiály londýnské vzdělávací instituce *City & Guilds*. Jako základní učební materiál pro výuku obecného jazyka používají *Glossa* a *Idea* učebnice *New English File* od nakladatelství *Oxford University Press* (OUP), *Tutor* dává přednost *New Inside Out* nakladatelství Macmillan. *Glossa* navíc v hodinách s rodilým mluvčím využívá učebnice *Natural English*, taktéž od OUP.

Jisté rozdíly jsou patrné i v oblasti testování. V *Tutoru* jsou všechny typy testů (rozřazovací, dílčí a závěrečné) velmi dobře zpracovány a testují jak jazykové prostředky, tak řečové dovednosti; *Idea* se může pochlubit především kvalitním vstupním testem, který zahrnuje jak psanou, tak mluvenou část. Rozřazovací testy v *Glosse* jsou však pouze psané a sestávají pouze z otázek s výběrem možností, což může vést k nepřesnému odhadu kandidátových skutečných dovedností. Naopak předtestování, které v *Glosse* probíhá každoročně v dubnu, je velmi důkladné a dává studentům možnost zvýšit či snížit úroveň skutečné zkoušky a maximalizovat tak šanci na úspěch.

Výzkum dále zahrnoval rozbor dvou dotazníků, z nichž jeden byl předložen studentům pomaturitního studia na zkoumaných třech školách v první den školního roku a druhý v dubnu 2012, tedy před koncem kurzu. První dotazník, vyplněný celkem 94 respondenty, z toho 40 z *Glossy*, 40 z *Tutoru* a 14 z jazykové školy *Idea*, byl koncipován jako analýza potřeb zjišťující předchozí zkušenosti studentů s výukou angličtiny i jejich představy o tom, jaký by kurz, do nějž se právě zapsali, měl být. Přínosné bylo především zjištění, že většina (86%) respondentů přichází do pomaturitních kurzů skutečně po maturitě, tj. přímo ze středních škol, což znamená, že v souladu s *Vyhláškou č. 322/2005 Sb., o dalším studiu* si tito studenti zachovávají status středoškolského studenta a s ním spojené finanční výhody.

Titíž studenti skládali nový typ centrálně řízené maturity spuštěný v roce 2011. 68 (84%) z nich se rozhodlo pro zkoušku z angličtiny (v porovnání s 13 maturujícími z matematiky), přičemž převážná většina (85%) si zvolila nižší úroveň (B1 podle ERR). Zdá se tedy, že ti, kteří se rozhodnou pro nižší úroveň maturitní zkoušky mají potřebu se v angličtině dále vzdělávat a zvýšit si úroveň jazyka, a to nejčastěji na úroveň B2 a C1, které garantují schopnost v cílovém jazyce komunikovat plynule a efektivně.

Cíl naučit se jazyk používat aktivně v každodenní komunikaci byl ostatně podle výzkumu pro 86% dotázaných primárním důvodem, proč se do kurzu přihlásili. Druhým nejčastějším motivem byla možnost připravit se na složení mezinárodně uznávané zkoušky, kterou lze uplatnit nejen při přijímacích pohovorech na vysokou školu, ale také při hledání zaměstnání. Třetí pozici obsadila možnost zajistit si díky dobré znalosti angličtiny výhodnou pozici na trhu práce; 44% studentů také při rozhodnutí přihlásit se do pomaturitního kurzu zvažovalo finanční úlevy spojené se statusem studenta. Možnost najít si práci či studium v zahraničí a připravit se na přijímací zkoušky z angličtiny hrálo roli pouze ve 40% případů, i když z dotazníku vyplývá, že 73% respondentů mělo v úmyslu se po skončení kurzu na vysokou školu hlásit.

Zjištění, že 79% maturantů přichází do jednoletých kurzů ze středních odborných škol – v porovnání s pouhými 16% absolventů gymnázií a 5%

odborných učilišť – odpovídá předpokladům Ministerstva školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy, že právě na těchto typech škol kvalita jazykového vzdělávání zaostává, a je proto nutné zavedení povinné maturity z cizího jazyka odložit, a to nejméně do roku 2013/14. Zároveň by však Ministerstvo mělo zvážit zachování dotací pro studenty pomaturitního studia, které tento nedostatek v jazykovém vzdělávání efektivně kompenzuje. Otázkou však zůstává, zda onen roční odklad bude ke zlepšení jazykových znalostí absolventů odborných škol dostačující.

Co se týká metod výuky, studenti mají ze základních a středních škol nejčastěji zkušenosti s metodou gramaticko-překladovou, komunikativní a audio-lingvální, a to v tomto pořadí, přičemž nejoblíbenější je jednoznačně metoda komunikativní. Pozitivní je ale především zjištění, že 19% respondentů považuje za optimální kombinaci několika metod, což odpovídá závěrům vytvořeným na základě studia teorie, a sice že nejvhodnějším se jeví eklektický přístup k výuce. Tato domněnka byla potvrzena i tím, že většina respondentů si uvědomuje význam vyváženého rozvoje všech oblastí jazyka, s důrazem na slovní zásobu, nácvik gramatiky, rozvoj mluvení a poslechu, ale také specifické dovednosti překladu.

Druhý dotazník vyplnilo 91 respondentů (jelikož v jazykové škole *Idea* se jej zúčastnilo pouze 11 z původních 14 respondentů), z nichž 82% uvedlo, že kurz naplnil jejich očekávání a 96% potvrdilo dosažení výrazného pokroku, a to především v oblasti slovní zásoby, gramatiky a mluvení, tedy právě v těch oblastech, které v úvodním dotazníku uvedli jako stěžejní. V hodnocení výuky, její organizace, použitých učebnic, metod a vyučujících celkově převažovala hodnocení kladná, oceňující především možnost naučit se aktivně používat jazyk, ochotu a profesionální přístup vyučujících, různorodost aktivit, intenzivní procvičení gramatiky, rozšíření slovní zásoby, důraz na nácvik výslovnosti, přiměřené množství opakování, zábavnou, ale efektivní formu studia s častým využitím her, soutěží a projektů.

Kritiku si vysloužilo především špatné rozdělení a nedostatečná nabídka úrovňových skupin (zejména v *Glosse*, z čehož vyplývá nutnost vypracování nového rozřazovacího testu a rozšíření počtu nabízených úrovní přinejmenším

o cílovou úroveň C1), nevyhovující vybavení učeben, absence reálií a kulturní výchovy, nevhodnost některých učebnic (zejména *Natural English*). Někteří studenti by uvítali více prezentací, přísnější přístup a profesionálnější vystupování některých učitelů, a to především v *Tutoru*.

Jedním z cílů diplomové práce byl výběr učebnice vhodné pro tento typ kurzů anglického jazyka. Aby se zamezilo eventuálnímu překrývání učebních materiálů, byly nejprve vyřazeny učebnice často využívané na středních školách, jimiž jsou podle výzkumu *New Headway, Maturita Solutions, New Opportunities, Time to talk, Horizons, Matrix, Getaway, Face 2 Face* a *Eurolingua English*, a to v tomto pořadí. V souladu s výsledky druhého dotazníku, ve kterém byla z používaných učebnic nejlépe hodnocená *New English File,* s níž bylo spokojeno všech 40 respondentů z *Glossy* a všech 11 z jazykové školy *Idea* (v porovnání s *New Inside Out* se 75% a *Natural English* s 62.5%), byly jako optimální vybrány učebnice řady *New English File*, které vyhovují eklektickému pojetí výuky a odpovídají věku i zájmům pomaturitních studentů. Jejich nespornou výhodou je i široká škála doplňkových materiálů, která nově zahrnuje i *Culture Link,* a splňuje tak i stále naléhavější požadavek kulturní výchovy. Přání prohloubit si vědomosti o životě v anglicky mluvících zemích se opakovaně objevovalo i v obou dotaznících, což je nezvratným důkazem, že výuka kultuře by měla být nedílnou součástí výuky cizího jazyka.

S ohledem na nedávnou úpravu legislativních podmínek bylo do diplomové práce zařazeno i shrnutí argumentů pro a proti odebrání statusu studenta frekventantům pomaturitních kurzů. Domněnka, že tento legislativní krok, kvůli kterému se náklady na studium zvýší, čímž se stane pro absolventy středních škol neatraktivní, vyvolá výrazný pokles zájmu o tento typ studia, byla výsledky druhého dotazníku potvrzena, neboť 71 z celkem 91 dotázaných (78%) uvedlo, že by se do kurzu bez studentských výhod nepřihlásili.

Zastánci novelizace tvrdí, že s ohledem na klesající demografické tendence a díky zavedení státní maturity z cizího jazyka, která má zajistit získání potřebných jazykových znalostí již na střední škole, není smysluplné pomaturitní studium dále finančně zvýhodňovat, obzvláště v období

ekonomické recese. Zástupci jazykových škol však varují, že zrušení statusu studenta pro pomaturitní studenty nemusí nutně přinést ekonomické úspory. Je totiž potřeba počítat s navýšením státních výdajů spojených s výplatou dávek v nezaměstnanosti čerstvým absolventům, kteří mohou mít potíže s okamžitým nástupem do zaměstnání, ale také učitelům, kteří při nenaplnění pomaturitních přijdou o práci.

Statistické údaje asociací jazykových škol i výsledky tohoto pedagogického výzkumu dále naznačují, že české školy, a to především střední odborné školy a učiliště, ještě nejsou schopné poskytnout svým studentům jazykové vzdělání takové úrovně, která by jim zajistila výhodné postavení na českém, ale především evropském trhu práce. Pomaturitní studium jazyků by proto mělo být zachováno, a to přinejmenším do doby, než české školství bude schopno toto kritérium naplnit. Legislativně by studium mělo být ošetřeno tak, aby bylo jak pro stát, tak pro jazykové školy a jejich klienty ekonomicky výhodné a příslušné orgány by se měly zaměřit především na jednoznačnou specifikaci podmínek provozování kurzů a jejich plnění.

Závěrem lze říci, že ačkoli pomaturitní studium má z pohledu jazykového vzdělávání nesporné přednosti, rozhodující roli hrají faktory ekonomické a pokud nedojde k výrazné změně legislativy, pomaturitní studium jazyků s největší pravděpodobností zanikne a jazykové školy se ze zřejmých pragmatických příčin uchýlí ke komerčně výhodnějším, avšak z pedagogického hlediska zdaleka méně efektivním formám studia.

GLOSSARY

English - Czech

Apprenticeship certificate *výuční list*: a certificate obtained on completion of secondary vocational education at a secondary vocational school.

Class register book *třídní kniha:* a book registering students' attendance and teaching materials used

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages *Společný evropský referenční rámec pro jazyky*: a guideline issued by the *Council of Europe* which is used to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages by means of six reference levels (A1-C2) defining the learners' language competences.

Extension study *nástavbové studium*: a two-year follow-up study for those who completed their secondary vocational education by obtaining an apprenticeship certificate. It is finished with *Maturita* examination.

Framework Educational Programme *rámcový vzdělávací program*: a curricular document defining binding educational norms across various stages: pre-school education, basic education and secondary education in the whole Czech Republic. It is further developed into **School Educational Programmes**, forming the basis of education at individual schools

Grammar schools *gymnázium*: a secondary school providing secondary general education in four-, six- and eight-year courses finished by *Maturita* examination and preparing pupils especially for the entry to a higher education institution, such as a university. Six- or eight-year grammar schools in their lower grades provide pupils with primary general education.

Higher education institution *vysoká škola*: a university or a college providing tertiary professional education. In order to study at university, students have to pass entrance exams. Universities offer three-year-bachelor programmes as well as five-year-master programmes which finish with a final state exam and a thesis defense

Language forms/ elements *jazykové prostředky*: various areas of language system, namely: morphology and syntax (grammar), lexis (vocabulary), phonology, orthography (and discourse)

Language school authorised to organise state language examinations *jazyková škola s právem státní jazykové zkoušky*: a language school offering language courses to the general public, which was awarded the accreditation to conduct state language exams in accordance with the *MEYS Decree no. 33/2005*

Language skills *řečové dovednosti*: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Maturita *maturita/ maturitní zkouška*: A final examination completing four-year educational programmes at secondary technical schools and four-, six- or eight-year educational programmes at grammar schools. It comprises four subjects, two compulsory (Czech and a foreign language or Czech and

mathematics) and two electives. The *Maturita certificate* (maturitní vysvědčení) is a prerequisite for the entry to higher and tertiary education.

National Education Programme *Národní program vzdělávání*: the supreme *curricular document*, which is created on the basis of the specifications in the *Education Act*

National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic (White Paper) *Národní program rozvoje vzdělávání v České republice (Bílá kniha)*: the conceptual document of Czech educational policy; it contains the plans for the development of education of the pupils between 3 and 19 years of age and proposals as well as recommendations of economic, political and educational nature, which are gradually being implemented

Post-secondary study *pomaturitní studium*: in general, the term refers to all forms of higher, further or tertiary education following secondary education completed with *Maturita* examination. In this diploma thesis, it is used to refer to one-year post-secondary language courses with day form of attendance with at least four 45-minute classes a day, in accordance with the MEYS *Decree No. 322/2005 Coll. on Further Study*

Register of Schools and School Facilities *Rejstřík škol a školských zařízení:* a list of schools maintained by the MEYS; schools recorded in the Register are entitled to provide education in the chosen field, form and scope and to receive funds from corresponding public sources within the limit specified in the record.

Secondary school leaver *maturant* a person who has just completed his/ her secondary school education with *Maturita* examination

Secondary technical school *střední odborná škola*: a secondary school providing four-year secondary education completed with *Maturita* examination. It usually prepares pupils both for an occupation and studies at higher education institutions. Secondary technical schools have an institutional specialization, such as agricultural, health-related, commercial, etc.

Secondary vocational school *střední odborné učiliště*: a secondary school providing two- or three-year secondary education with *Apprenticeship certificate* (výuční list) and/ or practical four-year secondary education finished with *Maturita* exam. It usually prepares pupils for an occupation.

Social security insurance contributions *příspěvky na sociální zabezpečení*: regular contributions to the state employment policy collected by the Czech Social Security Administration, including contributions towards pensions, sickness benefits and unemployment benefits[25].

Tertiary technical school *vyšší odborná škola*: a school providing three-year tertiary professional education finished by *Absolutorium* examination. Tertiary technical school graduates are awarded a degree *Qualified specialist* (= diplomovaný specialista) written after his/ her name and abbreviated as DiS.

White Paper *Bílá kniha*: see *National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic*

[25] http://www.cssz.cz/NR/rdonlyres/757820FF-10B3-4BB3-AE5F-2C02771B6DCD/0/cssz_aj.pdf

Czech - English

Bílá kniha *White Paper*

Gymnázium *grammar school*

Jazyková škola s právem státní jazykové zkoušky *language school authorised to organise state language examinations*

Jazykové prostředky *language forms/ elements*

Maturant *secondary school leaver*

Maturita/ maturitní zkouška *Maturita*

Národní program rozvoje vzdělávání v České republice (Bílá kniha) *National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic (White Paper)*

Národní program vzdělávání *National Education Programme*

Nástavbové stadium *extension study*

Pomaturitní stadium *post-secondary study*

Rámcový vzdělávací program *Framework Educational Programme*

Rejstřík škol a školských zařízení *Register of Schools and School Facilities*

Řečové dovednosti *language skills*

Sociální zabezpečení *social security*

Společný evropský referenční rámec pro jazyky *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*

Střední odborná škola *secondary technical school*

Střední odborné učiliště *secondary vocational school*

Školní vzdělávací program *School Educational Programme*

Třídní kniha *class register book*

Vysoká škola *higher education institution, university*

Vyšší odborná škola *tertiary technical school*

Výuční list *apprenticeship certificate*

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